

STARS AND STRIPES.®

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Lauren Graham



To our readers

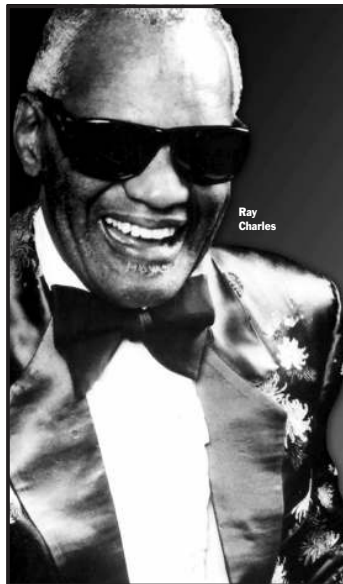
Due to technical problems, the "Valentine's Messages" special section did not appear in the Middle East edition of Stars and Stripes on Monday. The messages are inside today's edition. We apologize for any inconvenience.

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2005

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Charles



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'Genius' is
rewarded at
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Alicia Keys

KANYE WEST, GREEN DAY AND ALICIA KEYS PHOTOS: AP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Al-Qaida trial: Eleven suspected members of the al-Qaida terror network went on trial Monday in Yemen, accused of planning attacks there and in other countries.

The prosecution says the suspects — all Yemeni men — confessed to receiving military training in Afghanistan and planning attacks against Americans and other Westerners in Saudi Arabia, Syria and Iraq. Some of the suspects were extradited from Iran, Saudi Arabia and Syria.

Roof collapse anniversary: Mourners, Russian Orthodox priests and Moscow city officials on Monday marked the first anniversary of a roof collapse at a popular water park that killed 28 people, unveiling a newly erected cross and memorial plaque at the site.

Relatives and friends of the victims as well as of the more than 190 people who were injured lit candles and lay portraits and flowers under the black granite plaque listing the names of the dead. A preliminary report has blamed a design flaw for the collapse.

Iran's nuclear ambitions: Iranian Foreign Minister Kamel Kharrazi said Monday his country has no intention of developing nuclear weapons, adding that such a course would violate "our ideology ... our Islamic thinking."

Kharrazi, speaking after a meeting in Budapest, Hungary, said Tehran also does not fear being attacked by the United States. But Iran is "well-prepared" for such an eventuality, he said.

Pope stops to reflect: Pope John Paul II, recovered from the flu and respiratory problems, is spending this week in a retreat for his traditional Lenten period of spiritual reflection.

During the period of prayer at the Vatican — which was scheduled before the pontiff fell ill — all audiences are suspended, including the pontiff's customary Wednesday public audience. The retreat began Sunday and will continue through Saturday.

Israeli body handover: The Israeli military delivered the bodies of 15 militants to the Palestinians for burial Monday, a handover celebrated in Gaza as the first real achievement of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, who is trying to prevent fierce militants from straying from a fragile truce.

This latest dividend of improved relations between Israel and the Palestinians came as Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced that he would ask the Cabinet next week to formally serve notice of the government's intention to withdraw from Gaza and four West Bank settlements.

England backs Pakistan: Britain has full confidence in Pakistan's handling of the nuclear proliferation scandal centered on its disgraced top scientist A.Q. Khan, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said Monday.

Straw made the comments after wide-ranging talks in Islamabad on Monday with President Gen. Pervez Musharraf, Prime Minister Shauk Aziz and Foreign Minister Khurshid Kasuri at the start of a three-country South Asian tour.

Pakistan rain deaths: Authorities in Pakistan's northwest on Monday reported 80



Afghan plane crash: Afghan National Army members search in the snow to recover the bodies of 104 people killed in the crash of an Afghan airliner 10 days after it smashed into a mountain in a snowstorm east of Kabul. Teams found the first body — that of an Afghan crewmember — on Monday. Bad weather and deep snow meant the recovery operation couldn't start until Sunday.

AP

more fatalities from a week of heavy rain and snow, pushing the nationwide death toll from the harsh winter weather to more than 430 as relief efforts continued.

The emergency relief department in North West Frontier Province said that roads to badly affected areas remained blocked by landslides and snow, hampering efforts to provide food, medicine, tents and blankets to the needy.

Nepal political maneuvers: Nepal's king consolidated his power Monday by appointing two former prime ministers who are seen as unlikely to challenge his rule to top posts in his Cabinet.

Kritinidhi Bista, 79, and Tulsi Giri, 78, were named vice chairmen of the 10-member Cabinet installed by King Gyanendra. Both served as prime ministers before 1990 when Nepal was under an absolute monarchy, and are therefore viewed as sympathetic to the king. Meanwhile, neighboring India stepped up diplomatic pressure on Gyanendra to restore democracy after dismissing the government and declaring a state of emergency earlier this month.

States

Robert Blake trial: With no fingerprints, DNA evidence or murder weapon that can be linked to Robert Blake, his Los Angeles murder trial has largely come down to the word of three men who say the actor tried to cast them as real-life hit men.

Two are retired stunt men who have had problems with drugs and the law. The third is a street thug-turned-minister who projected a persona on the witness stand that evoked comparisons to one of the charac-

ters in television's popular mob drama "The Sopranos." All three said Blake tried to cast them as real-life hit men and they refused.

Michael Jackson trial: Attorneys on both sides of pop star Michael Jackson's child-molestation trial now face the delicate task of selecting 20 jurors from a total of 250 people who filled out questionnaires.

After a weeklong delay, jury selection was expected to resume Monday with prosecutors and defense attorneys trying to thin the list to 12 panelists who will render a verdict and eight alternates.

War on terrorism

Taliban suspect caught: Security forces detained a suspected Taliban commander in central Afghanistan after finding him hiding in a well and have handed him over to the U.S. military, an official said Monday.

Mullah Mohammed Naem surrendered Friday after Afghan troops surrounded the house he was in, Gov. Jan Mohammed Khan said. Naem was responsible for several attacks on American and Afghan troops in the region, Khan claimed.

Military

Missile defense test: A test of the national missile defense system failed Monday when an interceptor missile did not launch from its island base in the Pacific Ocean, the military said. It was the second failure in months for the experimental program.

A statement from the Missile Defense Agency said the cause of the failure was under investigation.

Stories and photo from The Associated Press

Corrections

■ A story in Saturday's editions about V Corps units returning to Iraq within a year should have said the initial assault into Iraq occurred nearly two years ago.

■ A headline on a story in Saturday's edition about a rights group claiming torturing of terror suspects should have said the group accused the United States of the abuse.

Comics, horoscopes
and advice every day
in Stars and Stripes

Army creates badge for non-infantry GIs

By LISA BURGESS
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — After 60 years of debate, Army officials have finally decided to create a badge for non-infantry soldiers that recognizes their direct participation in ground combat.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker presented the new Close Combat Badge, or CCB, to a cadre of senior officers Friday, during a regularly scheduled meeting of four-star Army generals, according to Lt. Col. Bryan Hilferty, an Army personnel spokesman.

The new badge will be the equivalent of the Army's Combat Infantry Badge, which was created in 1943.

The CCB, in the form of a rifle surrounded by a wreath, is reserved for infantry and Special Forces soldiers only.

The Close Combat Badge will be awarded to soldiers with military occupational specialties in armor, the cavalry, combat engineering, and field artillery. Officers must have a branch or specialty recognized in Army regulations as "having a high probability to routinely engage in direct combat."

The CCB will be presented only to soldiers who are engaged in active ground combat, moving to contact and destroy the enemy with direct fire.

All soldiers are allowed to wear their unit patch on their right shoulder as a "combat patch" after spending 30 days in an authorized combat theater.

Proposed criteria for badge

Who is eligible: Colonel or below for officers; all enlisted soldiers are eligible

Enlisted soldiers must have a Military Occupational Specialty in Armor or Cavalry (CMF 19), Artillery (CMF 13), or Combat Engineer (CMF 12)

Officers must have a branch or specialty officially recognized in Army Regulation 611-1 as "having a high probability to routinely engage in direct combat"

Soldiers must be:

- Assigned or attached to an Army brigade or smaller unit that is purposely organized to routinely conduct close combat operations and engage in direct combat in accordance with existing Army rules and policy
- Under fire while engaged in active

ground combat, to moving into contact and destroy the enemy with direct fire

Battle or campaign participation is not sufficient to qualify for this award; the unit must have been in active ground combat

Additional eligible personnel:

- If all other criteria are met, eligibility may include other services and foreign soldiers assigned to Army units of brigade and below.

Effective date: Sept. 11, 2001 (retroactive)

Note: As of Feb. 14, this criterion was "pre-decisional," meaning that it has not yet been fully approved by Army or Defense Department officials.

Source: U.S. Army

While prestigious, however, the wear of this unit patch as a combat designator does not necessarily indicate that the wearer was involved in direct ground fighting.

That is the purpose of the Combat Infantry Badge and Combat Medical Badge, which is reserved for Army, Navy and Air Force medics. These were the only two Army symbols that indicate that the wearer has come under direct enemy fire.

Combat badges are different from military medals. Medals and the ribbons that

represent them are worn only on a soldier's mess dress and Class "A" and "B" uniforms, never on battle dress uniforms.

But the badges, which are rectangular pieces of metal when worn on the dress or Class "A" and "B" uniforms, are also worn as a fabric patch above the right-hand breast pocket of the BDUs — acting as a "visual recognition of close combat" whenever a soldier is in uniform, Hilferty said.

The creation of the new Close Combat Badge closes a debate that soldiers have

been "talking about since the 1940s," when the CIB was established, Hilferty said in a Monday telephone interview.

Soldiers and their leaders have argued over the years that the infantry and Special Forces are not the only two branches of the Army that get into firefights.

The Army has periodically reviewed the criteria for the Combat Infantry Badge, but it wasn't until the conventional war in Iraq and Afghanistan turned into insurgencies that the non-infantry soldiers' point of view gained increased momentum.

So, at the request of commanders in Iraq and Afghanistan, last year Schoomaker approved the creation of a task force to look at creating a new combat badge to widen the pool of soldiers recognized for their actions under fire, Hilferty said.

More details about the new Close Combat Badge, including its design and the procedure for soldiers to request the award, will be unveiled later this week, Hilferty said.

Army officials said they are hoping that Lt. Gen. Franklin L. "Buster" Hagenbeck, the Army's chief of personnel, will personally announce those details.

A March administrative message will follow that formally outlines the exact rules and regulations, officials said.

The new badge should be available this fall through unit supply and also for purchase in military clothing sales stores.

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgess@stripes.osd.mil

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday, at least 1,461 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,111 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include four military civilians.

The AP count is 11 higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at the end of last Friday.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,323 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 1,002 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

- Three U.S. soldiers were killed Sunday when their vehicle rolled into a canal near Balad, Iraq.

- A U.S. soldier was killed Sunday in hostile action near Samarra, Iraq.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

- Army Staff Sgt. Christopher L. Shepherd, 26, Lynchburg, Va., killed Friday when an explosive detonated during clearing operations in Baghdad; assigned to the 767th Ordnance Company, 63rd Ordnance Battalion, 52nd Ordnance Group, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

- Army Spc. Robert A. McNeil, 30, Meridian, Miss., killed Friday in a vehicle accident in Iskandariyah, Iraq; assigned to the Army National Guard's 150th Combat Engineer Battalion, 155th Brigade Combat Team, Quantico, Miss.
- Army Staff Sgt. William T. Robbins, 31, North Little Rock, Ark.; died Thursday in Tajikistan, Iraq, of noncombat injuries; assigned to the Army National Guard's 39th Infantry Brigade, Little Rock, Ark.

GI, three Iraqi troops killed in attack Rebels attack pipeline

By CHRIS TOMLINSON

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Roadside bombs killed a U.S. soldier and three Iraqi National Guard troops Monday and officials said insurgents blew up an oil pipeline near Kirkuk and killed two senior police officers in Baghdad. Political leaders, meanwhile, sized up their positions in a new government.

One American soldier was killed and three wounded Monday when a bomb detonated near their patrol in northern Iraq, the military said. The explosion occurred when the soldiers from Task Force Liberty were on a combat patrol near the town of Baquba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, the U.S. command said in a statement.

Police in Mosul said gunmen ambushed a police vehicle transporting a suspected insurgent south of the city on Monday. Two police officers were killed, two wounded and the suspect escaped.

Insurgents fired mortar attacks at a police station in central Baghdad, injuring three, police said.

Another insurgent mortar attack in Samarra, 60 miles north of Baghdad, killed a woman and a two-year-old girl, as well as injuring seven others, said Dr. Alaa Al-Din Muhammed of Samarra Hospital.

In Baghdad, gunmen firing from a car killed two high-ranking policemen Sunday night, an Interior Ministry official said. He provided no other details.

Insurgents damaged an oil pipeline Sunday at the North Oil Company's Al-Dibbis oil field near Kirkuk, setting it on fire, said Maj. Gen. Anwar Mohammad Amin. The pipeline supplied oil for internal use and the damage will hamper the country's oil production, he said.

It would take workers at least three days



Iraqis stand in front of a burning oil pipeline after insurgents blew it up at the North Oil Company's Al-Dibbis oil field near Kirkuk, in the northern Kurdish area of Iraq on Monday.

to extinguish the blaze and repair the pipeline, Amin said.

The Al-Qaida affiliate in Iraq also claimed responsibility for a number of attacks Sunday in statements posted on a militant web site. The claims could be independently verified.

The violence comes after election officials announced the results of the Jan. 30 elections.

Meanwhile, kidnappers of a Swedish citizen in Iraq have demanded a ransom for his freedom and threatened to decapitate him if they don't receive it, a Stockholm radio station reported Monday.

The kidnappers, who call themselves "The Martyr Al-Isawy Brigades," also want Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf to take

part in negotiations for the freedom of Minas Ibrahim al-Yousifi, the purported leader of the Christian Democratic Party in Iraq, his family told Radio Joonkeoping over the weekend.

An Iraqi translator for Italian troops and his son were shot to death Sunday in the southern Iraqi city of Nasiriyah, a spokesman for Italy's military said. The spokesman said officials were investigating and so far had no leads. The exact circumstances of the shooting were unclear.

The Ansar al-Sunnah Army militant group claimed in an Internet statement Sunday that it had kidnapped an Iraqi Christian translator who worked at a U.S. military base. The claim, posted on a Web site known as a clearing house for militant statements, could not be immediately verified.

Post-vote alliances emerge among Iraqis

Shiite ticket leader talks with advisers

By ROBERT H. REID

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Talks on who would get what in Iraq's newly elected National Assembly were under way even before the final results came in, but the clergy-backed Shiites, whose winning margin was less than what they expected, may now have to compromise more than anticipated.

With barely 50 percent of the final vote in the 275-member National Assembly, the United Iraqi Alliance will not have control over the assembly, leading to speculation it may soon form a coalition with the independence-minded Kurds, who won 26 percent of the vote. A two-thirds majority is needed to control the legislature.

Abdel-Aziz Al-Hakim, the Shiite ticket's leader, was meeting with political allies at his office Monday afternoon, associates said.

Al-Hakim, who lost 19 family members to Saddam Hussein's executions, sat and wept as he heard the results on Sunday. He later told Iraqi television of the need for cooperation with disenfranchised Sunnis already alienated in postwar Iraq.

"We believe in the need for participation and will seek harmony among all segments of the Iraqi people," he said.

The election results highlighted the sharp differences among Iraq's ethnic, religious and cultural groups — many of whom fear domination not just by the Shiites, estimated at 60 percent of the population, but also by the Kurds, the most pro-American group and about 15 percent of the population.

Seats will generally be allocated according to the percentage of votes that each ticket won. It appeared only 12 coalitions would take seats. The Shiites stand to gain up to 140 seats and the Kurds could end up with about 75.

"This is a great victory for the Iraqi people," said Ahmad Al-Halabi, a former Pentagon protégé and member of the Shiite ticket who is lobbying for the prime minister's post. "We will have an assembly which is elected by the people and the government which is completely legitimate and elected by the people."

Other leading contenders for the top post include fellow Shiites Ibrahim Jaafari, a vice president; Finance Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi; and former nuclear scientist Hussain al-Shahrastani.

Abdul-Mahdi told the media outlet al-Arabiya that the next Iraqi government is burdened with "difficult and complicated responsibilities that require national unity and the wide support of the national assembly and the presidency. He said his alliance is "seeking to realize a wide national harmony in choosing" for those positions.

Sunday's published results threw immedi-



A Kurdish man waves a Kurdish flag as he runs through the streets of Kirkuk, Iraq, despite a curfew. He was celebrating a strong electoral result for the Kurds on Sunday.

ate focus on Iraqi leaders' backdoor dealmaking to create a new coalition government and on efforts to lure Sunnis into the fold and away from a bloody insurgency.

Election commission officials would not say Monday when the new National Assembly was expected to meet. Competitors have two more days to lodge complaints or dispute the results announced Sunday.

Then, election official Adel al Lami said, the commission will hand the results to the current interim government, which will then decide when to formally transfer authority to the incoming National Assembly.

Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, the secular Shiite chosen by the United States to lead this country for the last eight turbulent months, fared poorly — his ticket finishing a distant third behind the religious Shiites and Kurds.

Iraqi Kurds danced in the streets and waved Kurdish flags when results were announced in the oil-rich, ethnically mixed city of Kirkuk. Thousands more Kurds — a people who were gassed and forced from their homes by Saddam's forces — turned out in Sulaimaniyah, firing weapons in the air and carrying posters of their leaders.

Overall, national turnout was about 60 percent, the commission said — but only 2 percent of the eligible voters cast ballots in Anbar province, the Sunni insurgent stronghold that includes Ramadi and Fallujah.

National Independent Electors and Cadres Party: 69,938 for three seats

The Communist Party: 69,920 for two seats
The Islamic Kurdish Society: 60,592 for two seats

The Islamic Labor Movement in Iraq: 43,205 for two seats

The National Democratic Alliance: 36,795 for one seat

National Rafidain List (Assyrian Christians): 36,358 for one seat

The Reconciliation and Liberation Entity: 30,796 for one seat

Total votes: 8,550,571.
Invalid votes: 94,305.

Minimum number of votes to qualify for one seat: 30,750.

From Iraq's election commission via The Associated Press

How did they do?

A look at major figures in Iraq's elections and how they fared in released results:

Winners

Abdel-Aziz Al-Hakim: Al-Hakim, head of the United Iraqi Alliance, the major Shiite political alliance,

oversaw the effort to send millions of Shiites to the polls. The cleric leader's success in his alliance won nearly half of the ballot cast in the election.

— ensures Shiites will have a prominent hand in drafting the country's constitution.

Jalal Talabani and Massoud Barzani: Leaders of two key Kurdish parties that earned more than a quarter of votes cast. The Kurdish alliance they represent will now have considerable support in the national assembly to preserve Kurdish autonomy in northern Iraq.

Also-rans

Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi: Allawi did not join the United Iraqi Alliance, instead leading his own group that came in a distant third place, with about 14 percent of the vote. Despite the lackluster showing, the U.S.-backed politician's role in the future government is uncertain — Allawi maintains close ties with the Kurds and no party won a majority in the election, meaning the parties will have to agree on a consensus leader.

Allawi

Bush praises candidates

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration said Monday it looks forward to working with Iraq's new leaders and said the United States is confident that Baghdad is committed to an "inclusive and representative" government.

President Bush issued a congratulatory message as a coalition dominated by Shiite Islamic parties emerged with the most votes from Iraq's historic election.

"The world saw long lines of Iraqi men and women voting in a free and fair election for the first time in their lives," he said Sunday. "The United States and our coalition partners can all take pride in our role in making that great day possible."

White House press secretary Scott McClellan, at a briefing Monday, echoed Bush's upbeat tone. "We look forward to working with the new government and supporting them as they move forward... on putting the leadership in place, drafting a constitution and then holding an election at the end of the year for a permanent representative government."

EU urges unity

The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — The European Union on Monday congratulated the winners in Iraq's elections and urged them to ensure all Iraqis are represented during the drafting of a new constitution.

In a statement, Ferrero-Waldner said results from Iraq's first pluralist elections mark another step forward in Iraq's political transition, said Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU external affairs commissioner.

In a statement, Ferrero-Waldner said the EU "looks to those who have been elected to assume the responsibility of governing Iraq in the name of the whole Iraqi people."

"I trust they will ensure full representation of Iraq's diverse society in the political process, and in particular in the drafting of the constitution," she added.

The winners

BAGHDAD — A list of the 12 political alliances that received the most votes in Iraq's Jan. 30 national elections and the number of seats they will receive in the 275-member National Assembly, provided the results are certified.

The United Iraqi Alliance (Shiite alliance backed by Shiite Muslim clergy): 4,075,295 — about 48 percent — for 140 seats
The Islamic Kurdish Society: 60,592 — about 0.7 percent — for 2 seats
The Islamic Labor Movement in Iraq: 43,205 — about 0.5 percent — for 2 seats
The National Democratic Alliance: 36,795 — about 0.4 percent — for 1 seat
The Reconciliation and Liberation Entity: 30,796 — about 0.4 percent — for 1 seat
Total votes: 8,550,571.
Invalid votes: 94,305.

Minimum number of votes to qualify for one seat: 30,750.

From Iraq's election commission via The Associated Press

The Iraqi List backed by U.S.-backed interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi: 1,168,943 — about 14 percent — for 40 seats
Iraqis (headed by interim Iraqi President Ghazi Al-Yawer): 150,680 for five seats
The Turkmen Iraqi Front (represents ethnic Turks): 93,480 for three seats



PHOTOS BY TERRY BOYD/Stars and Stripes

Right: Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, 42nd Infantry Division commander, right, took command of north-central Iraq from Maj. Gen. John R.S. Batiste, 1st Infantry Division, left, on Monday at FOB Danger in Tikrit. Above: Security was heavy at the ceremony as about a hundred Iraqi dignitaries and U.S. civilians attended the transfer of authority to the 42nd Infantry Division from the 1st Infantry Division.



Guard unit takes over FOB Danger

BY TERRY BOYD
Stars and Stripes

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DANGER, Iraq — Rather than talk about Americans changing authority, Maj. Gen. John R.S. Batiste emphasized how Iraqis are taking charge.

The end of his division's yearlong deployment brings "irreversible momentum" toward Iraqi participation in self-governance that will thwart the insurgency, Batiste said.

His 1st Infantry Division accomplished a great deal in north-central Iraq, Batiste said during Monday's transfer of authority ceremony at FOB Danger in Tikrit.

With the Jan. 30 elections, the Iraqi people showed the courage to choose their leaders and control their destiny, he said. Quoting an Iraqi woman, the elections "were like a bullet in the heart of the enemy," Batiste said, while acknowledging the 1st ID's own losses of more than 100 soldiers killed and 1,000 wounded.

The ceremony marked the first time a National Guard unit is the division command over active-duty units in Iraq.

The Big Red One increased combined operations with new, better-led Iraqi army units and oversaw 2,000 reconstruction projects worth about \$1 billion, he said.

The 1st ID's Task Force Danger gave way to Task Force Liberty under the Troy, N.Y.-based 42nd Infantry Division. The ceremony marked the first time a National Guard unit is the division command over active-duty units in Iraq — in this case brigades from the 3rd Infantry Division from Fort Benning, Ga., Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto, 42nd ID commander, pledged to maintain momentum.

Taluto took time to thank by name several 1st ID officers and soldiers, including Batiste and Command Sgt. Maj. Corey McCarty, for their assistance in helping the 42nd transition.

While there has been dramatic progress during the last few months, there's much to do, Batiste said in a Sunday interview. The new government must undo decades of Saddam Hussein's Arab-centric, Sunni-based rule and integrate Kurds, Turkmen and Shiite Iraqis, he said.

The 42nd ID's tenure got off to a deadly start. One American soldier was killed and three wounded Monday when a bomb detonated near their patrol in northern Iraq, the military said.

The explosion occurred when the soldiers from Task Force Liberty were on a combat patrol near the town of Baquba, 35 miles northeast of Baghdad, the U.S. command said in a statement. The identities of the soldiers were withheld pending notification of the family members.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.
E-mail Terry Boyd at: boyd@mail.estrates.osd.mil

Navy, NATO exercise gets new name

BY SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

NAPLES, Italy — U.S. and NATO forces are gearing up for the kickoff of a two-week air and sea exercise in the Ionian Sea, east of Sicily.

It's the 30th year for the exercise, which until this year was known as Dogfish but, because of new regulations, this year will be called Noble Marlin.

Under the new rules, exercises must now consist of two words to identify the location of the commanding element and the general mission type, such as air, land-, or sea-based, said Navy Capt. Jeff Gradeck, a NATO spokesman.

Because the upcoming exercise is controlled from the NATO regional headquarters in Naples, and is maritime in nature, the first letters needed to be "N" and "M," hence the creation of Noble Marlin, Gradeck said.

The operation will take place between March 3 and 16. Details, such as the number of vessels and a final list of participating nations, won't be released until the end of February, said U.S. Navy Lt. Liubov Russell, an exercise spokeswoman.

Last year, 11 nations participated in Dogfish '04, the alliance's largest annual anti-submarine warfare exercise. This year, 10 nations will be participating.

Combined Task Force 67, headquartered at Naval Air Station Sigonella, Sicily, will provide P3 Orion for the exercise, said U.S. Navy Capt. Robert Lally, commander of CTF-67. The task force provides tactical mission support to U.S. and NATO maritime patrol aircraft.

The operation will test anti-submarine, anti-surface and coastal surveillance operations, and sharpen communications between the allied nations' militaries, Lally said.

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontz@mail.estrates.osd.mil

Bamberg community prepares for 1st ID return

BY RICK EMERT
Stars and Stripes

BAMBERG, Germany — After a year in a combat zone, single soldiers from the 1st Infantry Division are finding that someone has left the light on for them.

Family readiness groups decorated the barracks and made the beds so that weary soldiers — including those from the 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment — can get some much-needed sleep after two days of traveling.

The unit's rear detachment is coordinating the delivery of household goods and vehicle pick-up for the soldiers as soon as possible after their return.

It's a lot of work for the rear detachment's skeleton crew and the family readiness groups, but no one seems to be complaining.

"We aren't worried so much about our time," said Staff Sgt. James Davis, Battery C family readiness leader. "It doesn't really matter if we are working until 8 some nights; these guys have

been working 24-7 for the last year. We don't want them to have to worry about if the bed is made or if the light bulb has burned out."

Some soldiers arranged to have their stored belongings delivered while they were still deployed. The rear detachment set up transportation office appointments for those troops as soon as they are manifested on a return flight, said Capt. Matt Davenport, 1st Field Artillery rear detachment commander.

"All of the soldiers were given the opportunity to have their household goods delivered a few weeks prior to their return," he said. "Some have decided to wait until they get back."

On other deployments, 1-6 Field Artillery soldiers left their belongings in the room, and it was sealed to prevent anyone from entering. On this deployment, the barracks were renovated while the soldiers were gone,



RICK EMERT/Stars and Stripes

Donated items sit on a bed in the Battery C, 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery Regiment barracks Monday in Bamberg, Germany. Family members put together care packages and made the beds for single soldiers expected to return from Iraq in the next few weeks.

so the household goods had to be stored.

The soldiers' vehicles are stored on Warner Barracks. Before they can pick them up, the soldiers must watch a driving

safety video that contains winter driving tips and reminds soldiers that they are not in Iraq anymore.

"They have been driving in Iraq for a year," Davenport said. "The video reminds them that

there are no (improvised explosive devices) in Germany."

"It's OK for other cars to pass you here."

The goal is for soldiers to get their cars on the first or second day home so they can drive to the reintegration training at various locations on Warner Barracks, Davenport said.

Volunteers put signs on the door of each room to greet the soldiers by name, and a care package with snack food and personal hygiene items was placed on every bed. The final touch, a plastic rose or mint, was placed on each pillow, said Christine Kurecz, 1st Battalion Family Readiness Group.

"It's our way of saying we appreciate all that they did over this last year," she said.

"The soldiers will really appreciate that," Davenport said. "The first thing they will want to do is rack out."

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Former official talks of loose cash in Iraq

Senior adviser expected to tell panel of 'Wild West' banking system during occupation

BY LARRY MARGASAK

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A former U.S. occupation official in Iraq thought he was in the Wild West in 2003 as he watched colleagues pull \$2 million in fresh bills from a vault and stuff them in a contractor's gunnysack.

Cash payments that weren't stuffed in sacks were made from a pickup truck that bore the name of Iraq's grounded airline.

American authorities thought the vehicle would "meld into the environment," the ex-official, Frank Willis, said.

Willis, who was a senior adviser in aviation and telecommunications, was expected to describe his experience Monday to a panel of Democratic senators. The hearing is to spotlight the waste of money in Iraq by the former occupation agency, the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Because Iraq had no functioning banking system in 2003, money was kept in a basement

vault in CPA headquarters, a former palace of Saddam Hussein.

Officials from the CPA, which ruled Iraq from June 2003 to June 2004, would count the money when it left the vault, but nobody kept track of the cash after that, Willis said.

"In sum: inexperienced officials, fear of decision-making, lack of communications, minimal security, no banks and lots of money to spread around. This chaos I have referred to as a 'Wild West,'" Willis said in testimony submitted to the Democratic Policy Committee.

"This isn't penny ante. Millions, perhaps billions of dollars have been wasted and pilfered," said the chairman of the Democratic panel, Sen. Byron Dorgan of North Dakota. He said the hearing was arranged because the Republicans who run Congress have declined to investigate fraud, waste and abuse in Iraq.

James Mitchell, spokesman for

the special inspector general for Iraq reconstruction, said in an interview that cash payments in Iraq were a problem when the occupation authority ran the country, and they continue during the massive U.S.-funded reconstruction.

"There are no capabilities to electronically transfer funds," Mitchell said. "This complicates the financial management of reconstruction projects and complicates our ability to follow the money."

The Pentagon, which had oversight of the CPA, did not comment in response to requests Friday and over the weekend. But the administrator of the former U.S. occupation agency, L. Paul Bremer, in response to a recent federal audit criticizing the CPA, strongly defended the agency's financial practices.

Bremer said auditors mistakenly assumed that "Western-style budgeting and accounting procedures could be immediately and fully implemented in the midst of a war."



Frank Willis, left, a former Coalition Provisional Authority adviser, and Darrell Trent stand in front of a pile of money in Baghdad in 2003.

Senator hopes to ease financial burden for families of reservists

BY KIMBERLY HEFLING

The Associated Press

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — When duty called him to Afghanistan, Dr. Anthony Carter closed his family medical practice in the tiny Kentucky town of Tompkinsville and laid off his 10 employees.

The Army reservist relished the chance to treat wounded soldiers. But Carter worried about mounting bills, his children in college and his former workers.

Many soldiers in Afghanistan and Iraq suffer from the so-called "patriot penalty" — the gap between what deployed Guard and Reserve troops are paid and their civilian salaries. Legislation being proposed would eliminate that penalty by reimbursing troops for up to \$50,000 of their lost income.

For Carter, the difference was

in the tens of thousands of dollars, and it meant having to borrow money to reopen his practice after nine months away in 2003.

Indiana Sen. Evan Bayh, a Democrat, is proposing a measure to eliminate the "patriot penalty" and offer tax breaks up to \$15,000 annually to corporations that supplement the incomes of employees called to service.

Bayh said he would offer his plan as an amendment to President Bush's proposal to boost government payments to families of U.S. troops killed in war.

About half of all troops in Iraq are in the Guard and Reserves.

Based on a Pentagon study, Bayh estimates 40 percent of those troops make less money while deployed.

"These families are trying to do the right thing for our country, and it's not right they should be struggling when we're in the right

position to help them out," Bayh said.

But some question whether his program — costing about \$250 million a year — is the best use of resources.

"This is a difficult environment right now and there are so many needs," said John Gohene, spokesman for the National Guard Association of the United States. "It becomes difficult to say yes, we support it, or whether we don't. It's a real tough issue."

Bayh said most payouts would be a few thousand dollars — a small amount "compared to the tens of billions we're spending annually in Iraq." He believes they could help with recruiting and re-enlistment efforts at a time when the Guard is stretched thin.

Not all troops would qualify. Some make more in the battlefield than in the civilian sector. Those who are single often come home with thousands in savings.



An Iraqi man peers out a Baghdad shop window, through a display of flowers and other gifts in a shop, a day before Valentine's Day.

Feb. 14 no big deal in Iraq

BY OMAR SINAN

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — For Adel Mousa, Valentine's Day is complicating an already delicate situation with his fiancée. He postponed their wedding planned for this month and has been looking for a safe way to make it up to her.

Mousa, a 28-year-old engineer, says he already has days he avoids his fiancée simply because water shortages leave him looking — and smelling — less than desirable.

So, setting aside his worries as best he can, Mousa's made dinner reservations Monday, Valentine's Day at a fancy restaurant.

"It's unsafe for couples to stroll Baghdad streets — car bombs and explosions are everywhere," Mousa said.

Valentine's Day has never been a widely marked holiday in Iraq.

Some Iraqis eye it suspiciously as a retail gimmick to get peo-

ple to spend money they don't have; others say it's inappropriate — a violation of conservative Islamic values — or that it simply is not possible to find an appropriate place to stage a romantic moment.

These days, isolated corners largely out of sight are too dangerous — crowded cafes are far safer, if less romantic. And in a time when Islamic extremists are fighting alongside loyalists of former dictator Saddam Hussein, public displays of affection are risky.

Zaid Falih, a 24-year-old student, said he will buy a bouquet of flowers for his sweetheart. Valentine's Day, he said, is just an excuse to squander money. "It will be the cheapest thing I can buy," Falih said of his bouquet.

Martin Rowel, who sat inside a Baghdad ice cream shop with his girlfriend Wafaa, downplayed the importance of such a holiday.

"I don't need an official date to celebrate love," said Rowel.

Salvation Army gives debit cards to families

The Associated Press

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The Salvation Army is giving away free \$200 debit cards to needy families of upstate New York military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"There are many assistance programs available to soldiers and their families, but sometimes they need more," said Thomas Schmitz, human services director for the Salvation Army's Empire State Division.

"These families can face a lot of issues. They might need rent money or money for their mortgage payments. Car payments or car repairs. Food. Clothing." Schmitz said. "We know \$200 isn't a lot. It's not going to solve any major problems, but it's just one more way we can help families who are making a great sacrifice for their country."

The Empire State Division serves 48 counties in upstate New York, which is also home to the U.S. Army's Fort Drum, near Wa-

tertown, and the 10th Mountain Division, which has played a major role in the war on terror. There also are a number of New York-based reserve units serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

KeyBank is providing the debit cards to the Salvation Army free of the \$1 to \$3 service charge, Schmitz said. The cards were purchased with \$270,000 granted from the Lilly Foundation, a philanthropic organization started in 1968 by the drug manufacturer Eli Lilly and Co.

Amputee fights for better insurance

BY SAM HANANIEL

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Ever since Army Staff Sgt. Ryan Kelly lost his right leg to a roadside bomb near Baghdad more than a year ago, he has been on a mission. It was more than just learning how to walk again on a prosthetic limb or figuring out what to do with his life after 13 months at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington.

Kelly, 24, of Prescott, Ariz., saw a need to help other wounded soldiers and their families cope with the financial struggles that come with months of rehabilitation.

In the past month, Kelly and an advocacy group for veterans have persuaded several lawmakers to support the idea of creating a self-financed insurance plan that would award \$50,000 to severely disabled soldiers before Veterans Affairs' benefits kick in. The federal money can take a year or more to get to recipients.

The idea allows those in the military to buy a new kind of disability insurance for a low monthly fee is supported by Rep. Rick Renzi, R-Ariz. He said he plans to introduce legislation that would make that happen.

"I don't know how you could say no to this," Renzi said. "There's these burgeoning costs that go with the families of these wounded guys that many times aren't covered."

VA spokesman Terry Jenkinson said the agency is familiar with Kelly's idea, but has not taken a position on it. The Pentagon would not comment on the plan. Injured soldiers become eligible

for VA benefits after their discharge. But it can be more than a year before those benefits are available, based on the recovery period. Soldiers continue receiving military pay during hospitalization, but often the money does not cover all of a family's expenses.

Extended hospital stays can require a soldier's spouse or parent to leave work for months at a time, depriving the family of income and sometimes meaning costly travel costs expenses during a stressful time.

Kelly heard story after story about soldiers losing homes or racking up debt during their convalescence. He began working on a solution with officials at United Spinal Association, a group that serves both veterans and nonveterans.

Renzi, a member of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, said the timing is right because of President Bush's proposal to increase life insurance and "death gratuity" payments to families of troops killed in combat.

"I think the chances are great that this thing could move," said Rep. J.D. Hayworth, R-Ariz., who plans to co-sponsor the legislation. "It can be a godsend."

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., the committee's former chairman, also plans to sign on.

Soldiers would pay about \$3 per month, deducted from their pay, to qualify for a \$50,000 payment in the event of a major injury in combat or training related to combat. The money would go out within days to soldiers who lose a limb or use of a limb, suffer severe burns, or lose their sight, hearing or speech.



Iraq war veteran Ryan Kelly, who lost his leg to a roadside bomb, was on Capitol Hill to lobby Congress for better benefits for wounded soldiers. Behind him is Jeremy Chwat, public policy director for the United Spinal Association.

DOD probes more Boeing contracts

BY ROBERT BURNS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon is investigating eight additional Air Force contracts to determine whether they were manipulated or influenced illegally by Darleen Druyan, a former Air Force official who was convicted last year of giving Boeing Co. special treatment on a tanker lease deal.

The eight contracts range in value from \$42 million to \$1.5 billion and their total value is about \$3 billion, according to a summary provided by the Pentagon on Monday.

Michael Wynne, the acting chief of Pentagon acquisition programs, told reporters that the eight contracts were identified as suspicious from among 407 reviewed by a team of military and civilian contracting experts. They referred the eight to the Pentagon's inspector general.

The eight are in addition to seven others that already are being investigated.

Wynne stressed that it is not yet clear that any of the additional eight have been tainted. They were picked for further investigation because they "seemed to be out of the normal process."

The review and investigations are an outgrowth of revelations about Druyan's handling of the multimillion-dollar deal with Boeing that would have allowed the Air Force to lease a fleet of new aerial refueling aircraft. Congress eventually killed the deal because of Druyan's involvement.

Druyan was an Air Force acquisition executive who later was hired by Boeing as a top executive. Last fall she pleaded guilty on felony charges and was sentenced to nine months in prison.

Boeing's former chief financial officer, Michael Sears, has also pleaded guilty for his role in hiring Druyan.

The eight contracts that were referred for further investigation were awarded between 1998 and 2002, Wynne said. The contractors involved are Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Andersen Consulting, Systems & Electronics Inc., and Pemco. The biggest was a \$1.5 billion award to a Boeing-Pemco team in 2000-01 for depot maintenance for the Air Force's KC-135 aerial refueling aircraft.

Rebate can help troops

PROVIDENCE, R.I. — Rhode Island taxpayers can donate a portion of their tax rebate this year to help the state's military personnel.

The Rhode Island Military Relief Fund Tax Check-Off went into effect for the first time this year, allowing the state's taxpayers to use a portion of their 2004 tax refunds to aid soldiers' families. The fund provides financial support for the families of the state's National Guard and Reserve soldiers, according to The Providence Journal.

From The Associated Press

Homeless veteran gets military burial

BY MATT CURRY

The Associated Press

DALLAS — Harold Dean Harris died homeless and destitute in an abandoned building and might have gone to a pauper's grave if not for the military papers found in his wallet.

An Army veteran, he was buried Thursday with full military honors. No friends or family came, and no old Army buddies swapped stories. But it was a soldier's farewell, the morning air broken by a 21-gun salute fired by a group of paralyzed veterans.

Harris, 63, and another homeless Army veteran, Hayden Glyn Kresge, 53, were laid to rest at Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery because of a partnership between the Veterans Affairs Department and a nationwide funeral home network that has paid for military burials for over the past two years.

Very little was known about either man, both of whom served two-year Army stints decades earlier. Military officials could not immediately say where the two men served. Neither had relatives or friends at their brief, back-to-back ceremonies.

A few VA officials came to pay



Sgt. Kristopher Tate, left, and Spc. Patrick Debor, U.S. Army honor guards from Fort Hood, Texas, fold a flag in front of the casket carrying the body of homeless veteran Harold Dean Harris as other homeless veteran pallbearers look on in the background in Dallas. The pallbearers are, from left to right, Dave Milliner, Juan Lee and Emory Leadbetter.

tribute, and a group of homeless men acted as pallbearers.

"Without you who came out on this cold day, these men would have had to go to their graves alone," said Cindy Simpson of Dignity Memorial Funeral Providers, the funeral home network.

Disabled American Veterans chaplain Cynthia Burks received the flag from Harris' flag-draped

casket. Moving with military precision, Michael Riley, deputy commander of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, wheeled forward to give Burks three polished brass rounds from the rifle volleys, representing duty, honor and country.

"When one is in need, we'll be right there beside them," Burks said tearfully. "It was an honor to

accept this flag."

The Rev. Alton Jones, a former homeless veteran himself, officiated at both services.

Veterans are eligible for Dignity burials if they were homeless and honorably discharged and no one comes forward to claim the body.

Dignity pays costs not covered by the VA, such as the casket and a hearse.

IN THE WORLD

Bomb kills former Lebanese prime minister

Assassination also kills at least 9 others, hurts 100



An injured man is helped away from the site of an explosion in Beirut, Lebanon. Former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was killed in a massive bomb blast of his motorcade.

BY BASSEM MROUE
AND JOSEPH PANOSIAN
The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — A massive bomb tore through former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri's motorcade, assassinating the billionaire businessman who helped rebuild his country after decades of war but resigned last fall amid a sharp dispute with Syria.

At least nine other people were killed and 100 wounded, including a former economy minister. The blast raised immediate fears that Lebanon — largely peaceful since the 1990 end of its civil war — was headed toward a new and bloody twist in its divisive dispute over the role of Syria, which maintains about 15,000 troops in the country.

The Lebanese National News Agency, quoting a statement from American University Hospital, said Hariri was pronounced dead on arrival, his body mutilated.

Some 660 pounds of TNT explosives were used in the bombing, security officials said on condition of anonymity.

They did not say whether the explosives were placed in a vehicle or on the side of the street.

Following an emergency Cabinet meeting, Information Minister Elie Ferzli told reporters that government will refer the case to the Higher Judiciary Council that looks into political and state security crimes.

The government also asked local media to avoid "acts that would lead to sedition" and issued instructions to identify the perpetrators.

Lebanon's Supreme Council for Defense instructed the army and internal security forces "to take all necessary measures to control the security situation." The council, which groups the president, Cabinet ministers and military officials, declared three days of national mourning.

President Emile Lahoud, a long time rival of Hariri, issued a statement saying the killing was "a dark point in our national history." He promised the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

There were no credible claims of responsibility. However, a previously unknown group, calling itself Support and Jihad in Syria and Lebanon, said it had carried out the bombing. It said the attack was a suicide operation and would be followed by more attacks "against infidels, renegades and tyrants."

President Bush was "shocked and angered" by the assassination, said White House press secretary Scott McClellan.

McClellan said the assassination was "a terrible reminder that the Lebanese people must be able to pursue their aspirations and determine their own political future, free from violence, and intimidation and free from Syrian occupation."

Hariri's assassination removes a main political buffer in a country divided among an opposition strongly opposed to Syria's role, and the pro-Syrian government camp. He was killed after attending a parliamentary debate where the two camps are divided over a new election law for polls due in April and May.

Note warns against spying for U.S.

The Associated Press

MIRAN SHAH, Pakistan — Security forces found a slain man's body dumped in a town square in a tribal region of northwestern Pakistan on Monday with a note attached warning people against spying for the United States, officials said.

Authorities were trying to establish the identity of the victim,

found in Mir Ali, a town in North Waziristan, near the Afghanistan border.

A security official and an intelligence official, who both requested anonymity, said the body was stashed in a bag with a note, written in the local Pashtu language, saying those who spy for America would be killed in the same way.

Pakistan is a key ally in the U.S.-led war on terrorism.

Thousands of Pakistani security forces have been deployed to the tribal regions of North Waziristan and neighboring South Waziristan in the past year to hunt for suspected al-Qaida linked militants, mostly Pakistanis, Central Asians and Afghans.

In recent weeks, suspected militants have attacked and killed several pro-government tribal elders in North and South Waziristan.

Serbian leader has tense visit to Kosovo

BY MISHA SAVIC
The Associated Press

ORAHOVAC, Serbia-Montenegro — A visit by Serbia's president to the disputed province of Kosovo fueled tensions Monday, with demonstrators pelting the convoy carrying the president with snow balls, eggs and stones.

United Nations officials had hoped the visit by Boris Tadic would promote reconciliation between Kosovo's ethnic Albanian majority and Serb minority.

But Tadic's declarations that Serbia would never accept an independent Kosovo angered ethnic Albanians, who want Kosovo to be granted independence in

talks on the province's future expected to start later this year. Kosovo Serbs and Belgrade want Kosovo to remain part of Serbia.

Several ethnic Albanian newspapers on Monday published a photo of Tadic holding a Serb flag during the first day of this two-day visit.

On Monday, Tadic called the position of Kosovo's Serbs "the worst of any ethnic group in Europe" during a visit to the central town of Orhovac and called for more international help to support them.

The tensions underline the difficulties that the international officials in Kosovo face in their efforts to promote reconciliation and es-

tablish a multiethnic society in the province, which has been an international protectorate since the end of the war in 1999.

The Kosovo war erupted when ethnic Albanians rebelled to fight for independence from Serbia. The brutality of the Serb response triggered NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999 that ended Belgrade's rule in the province.

Earlier Monday, he lauded several hundred Serbs for staying in Kosovo despite their fragile security situation.

"This is the place where you have always lived, where your ancestors had lived," Tadic said. "I admire your endurance to stay here despite all the difficulties and challenges."

Taliban truce in the works

KABUL, Afghanistan — Senior Taliban members have agreed to join a reconciliation process to be announced soon by the Afghan government, the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan said on Monday.

Zalmay Khalilzad said there had been a "positive response" to overtures from U.S. and Afghan officials, which have intensified in recent months.

"Quite a number of people associated with the Taliban have taken advantage of it already and ... they've come in, and some senior members have also come in," Khalilzad said at a news conference.

Coroner: Suspect had heart attack

KUWAIT CITY — The coroner's report says accused terrorist leader Amer al-Enadi died of a heart failure and there were no signs of torture, the interior minister said Monday, hoping to put an end to suspicions raised by Muslim fundamentalists.

"The forensics report is clear," said Sheikh Nawwaf al Ahmed Al Sabah. "There are no signs of torture on his body, and the cause of death is heart failure."

The former mosque preacher, 29, died Feb. 8.

From The Associated Press



Police investigators inspect the scene where a bomb exploded Monday inside a bus in Makati, Philippines, killing three people and injuring 60 others. Extremist group Abu Sayyaf claimed responsibility, police said.

Militants: Bombs a 'gift' to Philippines' Arroyo

BY PAUL ALEXANDER
The Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — Three bombs jolted Manila and two other Philippine cities Monday, killing at least nine people and wounding more than 100 others, police said. The Muslim extremist group Abu Sayyaf claimed responsibility for the blasts.

The group said the bombings were retribution for a major military offensive against Islamic militants in the southern Philippines, where 60 people have been killed in recent clashes.

"You can attribute this to us," an Abu Sayyaf leader, Abu Solaiman, told DZBB radio 20 minutes after Monday's first two blasts.

"There is one more to come," he said before the Manila bombing.

In a second telephone call, Solaiman said the bombings were a Valentine's Day "gift" to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

National police head Gen. Edgar Aglipay ordered the 114,000-member police force to tighten security at vital installations and conventional establishments nationwide.

The Manila bombing occurred about 7:30 p.m. on a bus along a busy highway just below a station for an elevated train and near the Intercontinental Hotel. Police said three people were killed and at least 60 others injured.

A blast outside the Gaisano Mall in southern General Santos city about an hour earlier could be heard one mile away, witnesses said.

Police said at least five people were killed and at least 36 others injured.

Another bomb, believed to have been made from mortar shell, killed a 12-year-old boy and injured at least eight people when it went off almost simultaneously at a bus terminal in Davao, also in the southern Philippines, home to a restive Muslim minority, terror groups and criminal gangs.

The Windsor Building in Madrid, Spain, remains standing Sunday after it was gutted by a raging fire. A large construction crane is still perched on the roof atop the unstable building's blackened frame. Streets around the building were cordoned off for a third day and many nearby businesses remained shut by government order.

AP



Gutted skyscraper upright, unstable

BY ED MCCULLOUGH
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — The skyscraper in Madrid's business and financial district that was gutted by a weekend fire remained upright but unstable Monday with a large construction crane still perched on the roof atop the building's blackened frame.

"Don't Fall Down," read the front-page headline on the free newspaper Que passed out to commuters on a subway that promised plenty of transport headaches. Streets around the Windsor Building remained cordoned off for a third day, while service on three Metro lines was curtailed for safety reasons. Many nearby businesses remained shut by government order.

The blaze that started before midnight Saturday was finally declared under control about 21 hours later. The cause has not been determined, partly because

it was too hot for firefighters to enter the 32-story building, and it's still too risky.

"What worries us now is its structural state because of the high temperatures it was subjected to," Merardo Tudelo, director of the Madrid Municipal Firefighters, told reporters Sunday evening.

Madrid Mayor Alberto Ruiz-Gallardon acknowledged, "The situation is still critical."

Madrid residents who didn't flock to the scene during the weekend stopped and stared Monday at the wrecked building that was a modern office building only days ago.

"This is the biggest fire ... this city has ever had," Gallardon told reporters and bystanders outside the twisted wreckage at midday Sunday.

Closure of the area around it — perhaps through Wednesday, Gallardon said — will affect dozens of businesses and several thousand employees.

Spain seeks 74,000-year terms for 9/11 suspects

BY DANIEL WOOLLS
The Associated Press

MADRID, Spain — A Spanish prosecutor said Monday he will seek jail terms of more than 74,000 years for each of three suspected al-Qaida members charged with using Spain as a staging ground for the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in the United States.

A trial is expected to start some time in mid-March but no date has been set, the National Court said. Spain will be only the second country worldwide to put Sept. 11 suspects on trial.

Prosecutor Pedro Rubira said that for each of the three suspects he is seeking 25 years in jail for each of the people killed in the suicide airliner attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Those three men are the alleged leader of a Spain-based al-Qaida cell, Imad Yarkas, and two alleged accomplices, Driss Chebli and Ghassoub al-Abrash Ghalyoun. Chebli is Moroccan while the other two are of Syrian origin.

Rubira said the official death toll for Sept. 11 was 2,973, so each man faces a possible jail term of more than 74,000 years.

The three are among 21 people who are to stand trial in Spain.

The other 18, however, are charged with belonging to a terrorist organization — not with actually helping plan the Sept. 11 attacks.

The other defendants include al-Jazeera journalist Tayssir Alouni, for whom the prosecutor is seeking nine years in prison, and Yusuf Galan, a Spanish convert to Islam who faces a sentence of 18 years.

The case stems from an indictment issued in September 2003 by Spain's leading anti-terrorism judge, Baltasar Garzon, against 35 people, later broadened to 40.

Garzon charged that Yarkas, a used-car salesman, provided financing and logistics for key Sept. 11 plotters. In the indictment, Garzon wrote that "it has become crystal clear" that Yarkas "had links to some of the perpetrators of the massacre."

Investigators on both sides of the Atlantic say that Spain — along with Germany — was a key staging ground for Sept. 11.

In July 2001, Mohamed Atta — believed to have piloted one of the planes that crashed into the World Trade Center — attended a meeting in the northeastern Tarragona region of Spain that Garzon said was used to plan last-minute details such as the exact date of the attack.

The 21 who will stand trial are in Spanish custody. The rest of those indicted by Garzon are either fugitives, such as Osama bin Laden himself, or in custody in other countries. Such is the case of Ramzi bin al-Shibh, a Yemeni suspected of being a key contact person with bin Laden's terror network for an al-Qaida cell based in Hamburg, Germany. He was arrested on the one-year anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks in Pakistan and is now in secret U.S. custody.

Those not in Spanish custody cannot be tried in absentia because the charge is terrorism. In Spain, such trials are held only for lesser offenses. Many of those in custody in Spain were arrested in November 2001.

Last of 'Fatima vision' threesome dies

The Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal — Sister Lucia Marto, the last of three children who claimed to have seen the Virgin Mary in a series of 1917 apparitions in the town of Fatima, has died, Portuguese media reported. She was 97.

Sister Lucia, a Roman Catholic nun, had been ill for the past three months and died Sunday at the Convent of Carmelites in Coimbra, 120 miles north of Lisbon, TSP radio reported, citing family sources.

Prime Minister Pedro Santana Lopes called Lucia's death "very emotional news."

Lucia and two of her cousins, siblings Jacinta and Francisco, said in 1917 that the Virgin Mary had been appearing to them once a month and predicting events, such as world wars, the re-emergence of Christianity in Russia, and one

that Church officials say foretold the 1981 attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II. The appearances took place on the 13th day of each month in Fatima, a town about 70 miles north of Lisbon.

The first sighting was May 13, and the appearances continued for another five months, ending abruptly in October. Shortly after, Jacinta and Francisco died of respiratory diseases. But Lucia became a nun and penned two memoirs while living in convents.

Sister Lucia



The Catholic Church later built

a shrine in Fatima, which is visited each year by millions of people from around the world. More than 100,000 people from dozens of countries routinely attend the annual commemorations of the sightings.

The pope has visited three times since becoming pontiff in 1978, spending a few minutes with Lucia during a 1991 trip to the site.

He has claimed the Virgin of Fatima saved his life after he was shot by a Turkish gunman in St. Peter's Square in 1981. The attack, on May 13, coincided with the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima, and John Paul credits the Virgin's intercession for his survival.

In 2000, he visited Fatima to beatify Jacinta and Francisco.

The funeral was scheduled for Tuesday, TSP reported.



It's NOT just another night in Iraq

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Cruise ship sends out distress signal

MADRID, Spain — French and Spanish rescue aircraft and boats went to the assistance of a cruise ship limping in the Mediterranean with more than 700 people aboard Monday after a storm knocked out its engines, maritime officials said.

The vessel has since been able to start up one of its engines. The spokeswoman said the Voyager was headed toward the Italian island of Sardinia.

Winter storm kills 2, leaves thousands powerless

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Two people were killed and some 14,000 homes were without power after a winter storm lashed Sweden, officials said Monday.

The storm dropped up to 18 inches of snow on central and southern Sweden. Police said two people were killed in separate traffic accidents. Utility Sydskraft AB said that 14,000 homes were without power over the weekend. It warned that some residents would get power back by Monday night, but others could be without power for a day or more.

From The Associated Press



DNA test results proved Jenita, right, and Murugupillai Jayarajah, center, left, are the parents of "Baby 81," a baby boy rescued from tsunami debris in Sri Lanka. The Jayarahs talk with their lawyer S.H.M. Manarudeen Monday at their residence in Kalmunai.

DNA confirms couple's claim of tsunami baby

BY KRISHNAN FRANCIS
The Associated Press

KALMUNAI, Sri Lanka — DNA test results confirm that a baby boy rescued from tsunami debris in Sri Lanka and dubbed "Baby 81" belongs to the couple who launched a wrenching court battle for his custody, a court announced Monday.

The finding ended weeks of uncertainty and drama surrounding the infant, who became a symbol of families torn apart by the Dec. 26 tsunami, and set the stage for a reunion Wednesday with his parents Jenita and Murugupillai Jayarajah.

"I am so happy, and I only have to thank God for giving my child back," Murugupillai, the boy's father, said. "We've got the results for all our hardships."

Nine couples originally claimed the boy in the coastal town of Kalmunai. The Jayarahs were the only couple to file a formal claim, but they couldn't document it because their records were swept away in the tsunami.

The court had ruled that the baby must stay in the hospital until DNA tests could

confirm his parentage, and the family underwent the testing Feb. 9.

The judge unsealed the results from an envelope during a hearing attended only by lawyers Monday, read them aloud and then ordered the couple, hospital officials and baby to appear before the court on Wednesday.

"Since they are the biological parents, I have noticed them to appear on that day and we will hand over the baby," Kalmunai Judge M.P. Mohaideen said.

"The reason they had to go through a DNA test is to ensure that the baby is not discriminated against," Mohaideen said. "This is the first such case in Sri Lanka and it is a historic case."

The couple's lawyer, S.H.M. Manarudeen, was embraced by a weeping Murugupillai after he broke the news to the Jayarahs.

"We will go and see the baby this evening. We're happy," said Jenita, the baby's mother.

The child's name is Abilash, and he was born Oct. 19, the Jayarahs say. He was pulled from his mother's arms when the tsunami hit on Dec. 26, they say.

Brazil searching for suspects in activist American's murder

BY MICHAEL ASTOR
The Associated Press

BELEM, Brazil — Police searched Sunday for four people suspected in the slaying of a 74-year-old American nun — the most prominent activist gunned down in the Amazon since the murder of Chico Mendes.

Dorothy Stang, who spent decades fighting efforts by loggers and large landowners to expropriate lands and clear large areas of the Amazon rainforest, was shot dead early Saturday near Anapu, a rural town about 1,300 miles north of Sao Paulo.

She was killed less than a week after meeting with Human Rights Secretary Nilmarino Miranda to report that four local farmers had received death threats from loggers and landowners.

Land ownership in the Amazon rainforest is often disputed by loggers, landowners and local peasants. The government grants land

titles, but they're rarely respected. Police refused to identify the suspects Sunday, but said they believed two hired gunmen had carried out the crime at the behest of two others.

An autopsy performed Sunday in Belem determined that Stang had been shot six times — in the head, throat and abdomen. Her body was expected to be sent back to Anapu on Monday for burial.

Stang, who was raised in Dayton, Ohio, defied the frequent threats to her own life.

"She was on a list of people marked for death," said Nilde Sousa, of the Para State Movement for Women, who worked with Stang.

Brazil's Environment Minister Marina Silva compared Stang's death to the 1988 murder of Mendes, the renowned rubber tapper who called international attention to the destruction in the Amazon rainforest.



Rescue workers carry a flood victim in the remote Venezuelan mountain town of Santa Cruz de Mora on Sunday after the Mocoties River plowed directly through the town.

At least 37 dead in Venezuelan floods

BY IAN JAMES
The Associated Press

EL VIGIA, Venezuela — Rescue teams in helicopters searched for dozens of people missing as a result of floods and landslides that cut a trail of destruction through small Andean towns and killed at least 37 people over the past few days.

Rescue workers searching for victims began digging in what remained of Santa Cruz de Mora, where a swollen river tore through town Saturday devouring homes and a bus terminal. Col. Esalain Longa Tirado said at the nearby El Vigia military air base:

At least 13 people were killed in the town, President Hugo Chavez said in a radio and TV address, adding that seven died in two other towns in the same remote river valley. "I want to express my sorrow to you in the Andes," Chavez said.

The latest deaths brought to 37 the number of people killed as a result of flooding and landslides triggered by an almost weeklong period of torrential rains across the country. At least 15,000 people in the afflicted areas were left homeless by the flooding.

Officials had earlier said 39 were killed, and the reason behind the discrepancy was not immediately clear.

In Colombia, similar flooding in the north-central part of the country, near Venezuelan, has left at least 25 people dead, and forced more than 25,000 others to abandon their homes.

Rivero said 39 people are listed as missing, but that there could be many more.

The floods came early Saturday morning, ripping through the towns in the river valley, said Maria Medina, a 47-year-old Venezuelan who lives in Fort Worth, Texas, but who had returned to her family home in Tovar on the eve of her son's wedding.

"I've never seen anything so horrible," she said.

Teen kills one in Japanese school stabbing

TOKYO — A 17-year-old burst into his former elementary school in western Japan on Monday, stabbed a teacher to death and slashed two other adults, police said.

No students were hurt in the attack at a public school in Neyagawa City outside Osaka, a police spokesman said.

Police arrested a teenage boy in the school's faculty room, saying he used an 8-inch kitchen knife to stab two teachers and a school nutritionist. School security has

also been a rising concern in Japan since a man with a history of mental illness killed eight children in a slashing rampage at an Osaka elementary school in 2001.

British cancer patient commits suicide

LONDON — A cancer patient who ganged himself may not have received a letter from doctors saying he was clear of the illness, officials said Monday.

Colin Jackson, 43, underwent intense treatment after being diagnosed with testicular cancer last year. He was

found hanging from a ledge in his apartment in Gillingham, southeast of London, on July 2.

Doctors sent Jackson a letter telling him the treatment was successful and he was free from the disease. But the local coroner's office said he may not have received the letter because he had recently registered with a different family physician.

The spokeswoman also said Jackson had no financial worries. Although Jackson's relationship had recently broken up "that was not thought to be the cause."

From The Associated Press

'Tiger's roar' sounds from North Korea

BY SANG-HUN CHOE
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — For many across the world, North Korea's announcement last week that it has nuclear weapons raises worries of nuclear Armageddon and a new arms race in Asia. For North Koreans, it was the tiger's roar at the yapping mutt of the United States.

"We shouldn't be too concerned about their (the Americans') snarling. That's the way they have always been. They seem to snarl more often these days, but that's just bluffing," North Korean leader Kim Jong Il said in comments relayed Sunday on state-run Pyongyang Radio.

"But if they do not stop yap-

Nation ramps up rhetoric after nuclear announcement

ping, we then give them a stern tiger's roar."

Whatever North Korea's real intent, heaping scorn on the Americans and raising fears of a possible U.S. attack fit the communist country's overall strategy.

For the outside world, North Korea uses its weapons — and its rhetoric — as a bargaining chip to trade for economic aid, diplomatic recognition and a nonaggression treaty with Washington, analysts say. At home, fears of a U.S. invasion distracts impoverished North Koreans and justifies Kim's "army-first" policy, bolstering his totalitarian rule.

In North Korea, ordinary citi-

zens are constantly reminded that America is the enemy. Village murals depict muscle-bound North Korean People's Army soldiers bayoneting sinister, scrawny American GIs. Ubiquitous banners scream dire warnings of imminent war, boasting North Korea will settle the final score with "American imperialists" over the unresolved 1950-53 Korean War, which ended in a truce, not a peace treaty.

The tiger-dog comparison is a particularly favorite trope of North Korean propaganda scribes.

When President Bush labeled North Korea as an "axis of evil," along with Iran and Iraq, the

North called Bush a "puppy knowing no fear of the tiger."

North Korea exhorts people to be vigilant against the Americans and loyal to the leadership, by saying: "As long as there is a rabid dog running around, the village is not safe." When American officials criticize it, North Korea dismisses them as an inconsequential mutt: "The dog barks, but the caravan continues."

American favorite tool of North Korea's propagandists is exalting Kim's brilliance.

According to Pyongyang Radio's Sunday dispatch, monitored by South Korea's Yonhap news agency, Kim Jong Il demonstrated his "pluck" to the world during the first nuclear crisis in 1993.

At the time, the United States, suspecting North Korea of building plutonium bombs, demanded special nuclear inspections.

Former President Clinton's administration finally struck a deal in 1994 that obligated North Korea to freeze its nuclear activities in return for free oil and other benefits.

The second nuclear crisis erupted in 2002 when U.S. officials accused North Korea of fueling the 1994 deal by running a secret uranium-enrichment program.

"The Bush administration subjugated countries like Iraq and Afghanistan, but it is at a loss about our country," Pyongyang Radio said. "That's because it felt crestfallen before our illustrious Leader Kim Jong Il's pluck, determination and military brilliance."

Couples marry in Thailand to boost tourism

The Associated Press

BANGKOK, Thailand — Hundreds of couples in tsunami-hit areas of Thailand celebrated Valentine's Day on Monday by exchanging wedding vows on mountain cliffs, elephants' backs and under water in ceremonies aimed at wooing back foreign tourists.

Ten couples from the United States, Germany, Britain, Taiwan and Thailand tied the knot while dangling from a 263-foot cliff in Krabi province, a popular tourist destination where hundreds died in the Dec. 26 disaster, said Thirrit Kinglek, president of the Krabi Tourist Association.

The sweethearts joined in a 50-foot procession before signing their marriage certificates while suspended over the rock face as "part of a tourist promotion campaign to bring tourists back to the province after the tsunami swept away thousands of visitors," Thirrit said.

The Asian tsunami claimed the lives of nearly 5,400 people in Thailand, many of them foreign tourists vacationing at the country's famous beach resorts. Another 3,100 people are still missing and presumed dead. The area's tourism industry, a key source of revenue, has suffered as a result.

The Valentine's Day — and the unusual wedding ceremonies — are organized and promoted annually by local business, tour operators and Thailand's tourism authority. This year, they decided to focus on the tsunami recovery effort.

In nearby Trang province, also pounded by the massive waves, 78 couples donned scuba gear and got hitched under 50 feet of water.



Three newly-wedded couples show their marriage certificates as Nadi chief district Vinai Jongtanna-bandit, top, looks on during the marriage ceremony on a cliff in northeastern Thailand. The ceremony was held to honor Valentine's Day and to promote the country's tourism.

"We hope that the underwater marriage will show tourist that the sea here is safe and beautiful, that the tsunami did not cause much damage to the underwater resources," said Surin Tohtanting, chief of the Trang Chamber of Commerce.

Thailand is predominantly Buddhist, but many people observe Valentine's Day as a day for love-making.

Hindu protesters burn Valentines in India

The Associated Press

NEW DELHI, India — Nearly 50 Hindu hardliners burned Valentine's Day cards and posters in the Indian capital on Monday, protesting the international day of love that they say imposes Western values on India's youth.

There was no violence as policemen cordoned off the area and prevented the Shiv Sena activists from marching through the sprawling Delhi University campus.

In the past, Hindu nationalists have ransacked shops selling cards and harassed young lovers seen holding hands in public.

On Monday, the protesters dispersed after chanting slogans.

Jai Bhagwan Goyal, a New Delhi chief of the Bombay-based Shiv Sena, said multinational companies were promoting Valentine's Day to earn money through the sale of cards and posters.

"This is against Hindu culture

and corrupts India's youth," he said.

The protest didn't have any impact on the university campus, as young students continued to move around exchanging flowers and cards.

Valentine's Day has gained popularity in India despite being a cultural flashpoint. Conservative traditions have been buffeted by growing permissiveness among high school and colleges students and young adults.

Effort to correct Israeli street sign mistake hits spelling roadblock again

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Eager to correct a long-standing mistake in the Hebrew spelling of a street named after legendary New York city mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, Tel Aviv municipal officials consulted the highest authorities before rendering the verdict on a new spelling — only to get it wrong again.

Many foreign names on Israeli street signs are misspelled, reflecting the fundamental incompatibility of Hebrew's 22 letters with the Latin alphabet. Lincoln, for example, usually comes out as "Lincolin."

LaGuardia Street, a major thoroughfare in south Tel Aviv, has been known to generations of Israelis as "LaGuardia" because the original misspelling — reflecting the lack of a "u" in Hebrew — was never corrected. LaGuardia is revered by many Israelis for the strong Zionist sympathies he demonstrated during his terms as New York mayor between 1933 and 1945.

The offending sign marks the off-ramp from the Ayalon Highway into LaGuardia Street.

After getting many letters and phone calls pointing out the error,

Aviva Avigal, chairwoman of the Tel Aviv Municipal Street Sign Committee, sought the advice of the American Embassy and the prestigious Academy of the Hebrew Language to come up with a proper spelling.

However, the new signs produced by the commission still got the name wrong — rendering it as "LaGuardia."

"I contacted them and asked how this could have happened," Avigal told Israel Army Radio on Monday.

Interviewer Yaakov Elon seemed impressed by her forcefulness.

"So in any event, starting today, it will be LaGuardia, as we always should have said it, after Fiorello LaGuardia," he said.

"Right," Avigal said, "Fiorello LaGuardia."

Elon was incredulous.

"Gardia, you said, Guardia,"

"Yes, this man who was so good for Zionists and the Jews, I hope this sign which I hope I'll be able to report soon will be in place for many years and we won't go back to the original mistake, and we'll do it the way it should be done in the first place,"

"We're all waiting for that," Elon said.

South Korean movie to film in the North

SEOUL, South Korea — A South Korean movie will be shot in North Korea for the first time since the division of the Korean Peninsula, a movie production company said Monday.

The last scene of the film, tentatively titled "Brave Family," will be shot at the Diamond Mountain tourist resort on the communist country's eastern coast, Dusabu Film studio said. Diamond Mountain has been open for tours operated by South Korea's Hyundai conglomerate since 1998.

The filmmaker said it has already received approval from Hyundai for the filming planned later this month.

The movie, set to hit theaters in May, is a comedy about a family who try to convince their dying father that — as he always wished — the two Koreas have been reunified.

The inter-Korean border remains sealed after the 1950-53 Korean War and is guarded by nearly 2 million troops on both sides.

From The Associated Press

IN THE STATES

Verizon offers to buy MCI for \$6.75 billion

BY BRUCE MEYERSON

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Verizon Communications Inc. is acquiring MCI Corp. for \$6.75 billion, a swift response to the acquisition of AT&T Corp. by SBC Communications Inc. and the third big telephone industry merger in two months.

The agreement announced Monday, scuttling a long-running bid for MCI by Qwest Communications International Inc., will result in 7,000 jobs being cut from the combined Verizon-MCI work force of 250,000 employees.

The purchase price was about a

half billion dollars below what Qwest offered for MCI, which recently changed its name from WorldCom Inc. after emerging from bankruptcy and a huge financial fraud.

Verizon, the dominant local phone company in the Northeast and a top cellular player, likely won MCI's favor because it is larger and in better financial shape than Qwest, the local phone carrier across the more sparsely populated Rocky Mountains and Pacific Northwest.

Denver-based Qwest had no immediate comment on the deal when contacted on Monday.

"MCI is one of just a few beach-

front properties you'd want to see, so it would be crazy not to keep our eyes out," for a company with assets like this up for sale, Ivan Seidenberg, Verizon's chairman and chief executive, said in a conference call with investors Monday morning.

The deal values MCI's stock at \$6.75 billion, or \$20.75 per share — equal to Friday's closing price on the Nasdaq Stock Market.

But after rising 12 percent in two weeks amid speculation fueled by the SBC-AT&T deal, MCI's shares fell \$1.06, or 5.1 percent, to \$19.69 in Monday's early trading.

Verizon shares rose 59 cents, or

1.6 percent, to \$36.90 on the New York Stock Exchange. Qwest fell 26 cents, or 6.3 percent, to \$3.89.

Under the agreement, Verizon will pay \$4.795 billion worth of its stock and \$488 million in cash for MCI's shares. In addition, MCI shareholders will be paid dividends worth \$1.463 billion.

Verizon also is assuming MCI's debt, expected to total \$4 billion at closing. The companies estimated that merger transition expenses will total up to \$3.5 billion over three years after the deal closes, but that cost-cutting from redundant operations will yield about \$1 billion per year in savings starting in the third year.

The deal is subject to MCI shareholder approval and requires regulatory approval, which the companies hope to get in about a year.

The deal comes some two weeks after a \$16 billion deal reached between AT&T and SBC, a top rival for both Verizon and Qwest.

"For Verizon, this deal represents a 'Why not?' strategy. With significant financial security, Verizon can easily pull this deal off," said Ben Silverman, telecom analyst for investment newsletter FindProfit.com. "The deal cements Qwest's place as an 'also-ran' and 'has been' in the telecom arena."

N.Y. man opens fire at mall, injures two

BY MICHAEL HILL

The Associated Press

KINGSTON, N.Y. — A man who opened fire in a crowded shopping mall with an assault weapon, wounding two, seemed to have a "lurid fascination" with the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, a prosecutor said Monday.

Robert Bonelli, 24, is accused of wounding two people and sending shoppers scurrying for safety Sunday after shooting his way into the Hudson Valley Mall, just outside Kingston — some 95 miles north of New York City — then giving up when he ran out of ammunition.

Police searching the suspect's room in the nearby town of Saugerties that night found a cache of "Columbine memorabilia," Ulster County District Attorney Donald Williams told The Associated Press.

The prosecutor would not detail what sort of items were found, but said it included media



Police officers walk from one of the entrances to the Hudson Valley Mall in Kingston, N.Y., after a shooting inside the mall Sunday. Police said a lone gunman opened fire, wounding two before being subdued.

accounts and other information about the Colorado shooting spree by two students that left 15 dead on April 20, 1999.

"We may never know specifically why his intentions were, or what his motivations were," Williams said.

"However, we are deeply disturbed and troubled by the recovery of Columbine memorabilia from his property."

"Information is being gathered that would demonstrate that the

defendant had a lurid fascination with the April 1999 shooting," he said.

Bonelli was being held without bail in the county jail after being arraigned overnight on first- and second-degree assault and reckless endangerment charges. If convicted, Bonelli could face 25 years in prison for the most serious charge, first-degree assault.

According to police, Bonelli opened fire walking into the Best Buy store in the mall. After firing

several shots, he made his way into the mall corridor and continued shooting until running out of ammunition near the center court, witnesses said.

The wounded included a National Guard recruiter who was in a booth inside the mall when he was shot. State police Capt. Wayne Olson said the 20-year-old man might lose his leg. The second victim, a 35-year-old man, had superficial gunshot wounds to his left arm, thigh and leg.

Teacher, pupil to marry

SEATTLE — Mary Kay Letourneau plans to marry the former sixth-grade pupil with whom she had two children, months after her release from prison for raping him, according to an online bridal registry.

Letourneau, 43, and Vili Fualaau, 22, set a wedding date of April 16, according to their registry at a department store.

Letourneau served 7½ years on a 1997 conviction for raping Fualaau, who has said in the past that he hoped to wed his former teacher.

"It's been long overdue," Noel Soriano, a friend of the couple, told the Seattle Post-Intelligencer in a story published Monday. "It's going to be fabulous, seeing them get hitched finally."

Suicide chatter found

PORTLAND, Oregon — A man who used an Internet chat room to set up a mass suicide on Valentine's Day had been trying to persuade women for at least five years to engage in sex acts with him and then kill themselves, a sheriff said.

Gerald Krein is charged with solicitation to commit murder, and prosecutors are expected to add an attempted manslaughter charge Monday, said Klamath County Sheriff Tim Evinger.

Combing through old chat room records, investigators discovered that Krein had been trying to entice women across North America to commit suicide as far back as 2000, Evinger said. Krein told investigators he had been in touch with 31 women, authorities said.

Self-defense stabbing

FORT MITCHELL, Kentucky — A woman stabbed to death while possibly trying to fend off a pregnant woman's fetus had been carrying an ultrasound picture of someone else's twins and was wearing maternity clothing filled with padding.

Police said 26-year-old Sarah Brady, who was nine months pregnant, acted in self-defense Thursday when she killed Katherine Smith.

No charges had been filed as of Sunday.

From The Associated Press

Bush to submit \$82B supplemental budget request

BY DEB RIECHMANN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush was poised to officially ask Congress Monday for an estimated \$82 billion to cover the costs of continuing military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and a myriad of other internationally related expenses, including training Iraqi security forces and aiding victims of the tsunami.

The White House was to send the supplemental budget request to Capitol Hill late Monday, White House press secretary Scott McClellan told reporters.

Included in the request is \$74.9 billion for the Defense Department, including \$5 billion for transforming Army divisions and brigades and \$5.7 billion for training and equipping Iraqi military and police, according to a federal official familiar with the supplemental.

The remaining money in the supplemental request includes \$950 million to help areas affected by the recent tsunami in the Indian Ocean; \$350 million to aid the Palestinians; \$400 million to reward nations that have taken political and economic risks to join U.S.-led coalitions in Iraq

and Afghanistan; money to help build a U.S. embassy in Baghdad; reconstruction funds for Afghanistan; and money for the Darfur region of western Sudan where a 2-year-old civil conflict has left tens of thousands of people killed and more than 2 million displaced.

In a written statement on this issue earlier, President Bush had said the special appropriation would support U.S. troops and help the United States "stand with the Iraqi people and against the terrorists trying desperately to block democracy and the advance of human rights."

The Army wants to use the \$5 billion to convert 33 brigades and regiments — about 30 of which are organized into 10 divisions — into a force of 43 to 48 brigades that would operate more independently.

"Instead of having the brigade communicate with their divisions and the divisions communicate with their higher-ups, all 43 to 48 would be allowed to communicate with higher-ups and operate more or less independently," said Steven Kosiak, an analyst with the Washington-based Center for Strategic and Budgetary Studies.

Last Monday, Bush submitted an overall \$2.5 trillion budget.



Artist Usher, winner of three Grammys on Sunday, performs.



Alicia Keys holds her awards for best R&B album, best R&B song, best R&B female vocal performance and best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocals.

West still upset

Kanye West has a beef with Dick Clark. West had complained bitterly about his defeat to country singer Gretchen Wilson at the Clark-produced American Music Awards. Backstage Sunday, the Chicago rapper was still ticked off. "I do not apologize to Dick Clark or the AMAs because you should not have had me perform and have me nominated for so many awards but not have an award," he said.

'Bittersweet' tribute

A bald Melissa Etheridge and teen soul star Joss Stone electrified the audience with a gritty tribute to Janis Joplin.

A barefoot Stone sang "Cry Baby," then teamed with Etheridge's vocals and driving guitar on "Piece of My Heart." Kris Kristofferson, who wrote the Joplin classic "Me and Bobby McGee," introduced the duo. Joplin died of a drug overdose at age 27 in 1970.

"It's bittersweet," he said. "She was so passionate about what she did."

White hot on Lynn

What do a 69-year-old country legend and a 29-year-old rocker have in common? A Grammy.

Loretta Lynn and White Stripes frontman Jack White teamed to sing "Portland, Oregon," which won for country collaboration with vocals.

Asked backstage about their "not new romance," White deadpanned, "What do you mean new?"

From The Associated Press

At the Grammys ...



Bonnie Raitt and Billy Preston perform "Do I Ever Cross Your Mind" in tribute to Ray Charles, who died in June, at the 47th Annual Grammy Awards on Sunday at the Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Charles' final album, 'Genius Loves Company,' wins eight

BY NEKESA MUMBI MOODY

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES—Ray Charles had a legendary career that defied categorization and influenced generations of artists—but he never had one of those blockbuster albums that many lesser artists have enjoyed.

Eight months after his death, all is right with the world.

Charles' final album, "Genius Loves Company," won a leading eight Grammy awards on Sunday night, including album of the year, record of the year for "Here We Go Again" with Norah Jones, and pop vocal album.

The victories highlighted the astounding success of "Genius Loves Company," which has sold more than two million copies—the most of Charles' 60-plus albums.

U2 won three awards, including best rock performance by a duo or group. Green Day, the most nominated rock act with six for their politically charged punk opera "American Idiot," won best rock album.

"Rock 'n' roll can be dangerous and fun at the same time, so thanks a lot," Green Day lead singer Billie Joe Armstrong said as he accepted the award.

Alicia Keys and Usher shared an award Sunday night for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocals for their chart-topping duet "My Boo." Each was nominated for eight Grammys; Keys won four while Usher had three.

The most nominated artist of the year was perhaps the most multifaceted—Kanye West, the songwriter-producer who made his rap debut in 2004 with the cutting-edge CD "The College Dropout." He was nominated for 10 Grammys, including album of the year, but only took home three, including best rap album and best rap song for "Jesus Walks."

He was upset in the best new artist category, losing to Maroon 5 in a race that also included country singer Gretchen Wilson, Los Lonely Boys and soul sirens Joss Stone.

Maroon 5's Adam Levine seemed almost apologetic.



The members of Maroon 5 pose with their awards for best new artist.

"Kanye West, I want to thank you so much for being wonderful," he said. The camera cut away to West, who looked less than pleased.

The oft-maligned Britney Spears also won her first Grammy—best dance recording for "Toxic."

Spears wasn't present, but another newlywed was on hand. Jennifer Lopez performed a duet in Spanish with new hubby Marc Anthony, their first public performance together.

Other performers included Green Day, whose rollicking act was bleeped by the censors; and U2. Even the "Godfather of Soul" James Brown joined Usher for a funky number showcasing their dancing prowess.

Perhaps the evening's most exhilarating performance was from Melissa Etheridge. The rocker, who is battling breast cancer, took to the stage for a Janis Joplin tribute with a shaved head but strong voice, and received a standing ovation.

But ultimately, the night belonged to Ray Charles. Besides the four awards for best album and song, "Genius Loves Company" won "for best instrumental arrangement" accompanying a vocalist, best gospel performance, best engineered album and best surround sound album.



The late Janis Joplin was honored by Melissa Etheridge, gesturing above, and Joss Stone, not pictured, with their renditions of "Cry Baby" and "Piece of My Heart." Etheridge's hair loss is a result of a battle with cancer.

The winners

A list of some of the winners announced during the broadcast of Sunday's 47th Annual Grammy Awards:

Album of the Year: "Genius Loves Company," Ray Charles and various artists.

Record of the Year: "Here We Go Again," Ray Charles and Norah Jones.

Song of the Year: "Daughters," John Mayer.

Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal: "Vertigo," U2.

Country Album: "Van Lear Rose," Loretta Lynn.

Rap Album: "The College Dropout," Kanye West.

R&B Album: "The Diary of Alicia Keys," Alicia Keys.

New Artist: Maroon 5.

Rock Album: "American Idiot," Green Day.

Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal: "Heaven," Los Lonely Boys.

Male R&B Vocal Performance: "Call My Name," Prince.

— The Associated Press



Kanye West poses with his awards. West, nominated for 10 Grammys, took home three for best rap album, best R&B song for "Jesus Walks," song he produced and co-wrote, and best rap song for "Jesus Walks."

3 children mourned in Alabama

The Associated Press

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — More than 1,500 mourners filled an Alabama church Sunday to remember three children who died after their mother allegedly starved them.

The children were found Feb. 4 at a Huntsville apartment they shared with their mother, Laticia Ward, who has been charged with capital murder after admitting she starved the three, police said.

Elder Joe Hereford, pastor at a church where the children sometimes attended Bible classes, called the mourners "to reach out with compassion and with love" in his eulogy to the youngsters — Shanika Ward, 11; Laticia Ward, 9, and Christopher Ward, 8.

"What I'm saying, Huntsville, we've got to be concerned about one another," Hereford said.

"If we can't learn to love one another down here, we might as well stop talking about heaven."

As rain fell, mourners released balloons over the children's graves.

Teachers from the school the children attended also spoke, remembering that the three smiled often and were helpful.

"They all took their schoolwork seriously," said Brenda Winkler, principal of Ridgecrest Elementary School, addressing the standing-room-only crowd.

"We loved these children."



Laticia Ward



Christopher Ward



Shanika Ward

Pedophile abused own children, ex-wife says

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. — The ex-wife of convicted pedophile James Porter said the former priest's death Friday brought relief but also renewed feelings of betrayal for the abuse she says he inflicted on three of their children.

Vernley K. Gray, who lives in Minnesota, spoke in an interview published Monday in the Standard Times of New Bedford.

Porter was convicted in 1993 of molesting 28 children while a priest in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fall River in the 1960s.

"I thought that now he can't hurt anyone else. I hoped he had come to terms with what he did," she said. "I had wished he had apologized, which he never did."

"He just caused so much pain and suffering and that would have been one step that could have helped."

Award-winning TV director Patterson dead at 64

LOS ANGELES — John Patterson, an award-winning television director who worked on dozens of shows such as "The Sopranos," "Law & Order" and "Hill Street Blues," has died at age 64.

Patterson died Feb. 7 of prostate cancer at his home in Los Angeles' Torrance area.

Over his 40-year career, Patterson worked on a number of made-for-TV movies but was best known for directing popular dramatic series including "The Rockford Files," "Magnum P.I.," "The Practice," "CSI" and "The X-Files Under."

He also directed 13 episodes, including every season finale, of HBO's "The Sopranos," claiming Emmy nominations in 2000 and 2003 as well as a Directors Guild award for TV drama.

He is survived by his companion, Andrea Makhanoff; a daughter, Mary, and a son, Charles; two brothers; and two sisters. His former marriage ended in divorce. A memorial service was scheduled Saturday. Contributions in Patterson's name can be made to KPFF-FM.

From The Associated Press

Basketball player suffers memory loss, but brother identifies him

BY KEN MAGUIRE
The Associated Press

BOSTON — A man found in a Boston subway bank last month with almost no recollection of who he was and where he came from has been identified by his brother as a native of the African nation of Niger who had been living in Greensboro, N.C.

The man, who could only remember that his nickname was "Teo" when he was found, is Omar Hamani, his brother, Maliki Hamani told The Associated Press on Sunday.

Omar Hamani had been missing for more than a month since he and three friends left Greensboro and headed to Washington D.C. in early January, his brother said.

Maliki Hamani next saw his brother on Saturday when Fox News broadcast the story and showed the man's picture. He immediately called Boston police and the local Fox affiliate.

"I'm happy to see him again. I didn't think I'd see him in this condition," Maliki said.

Omar Hamani is 22 years old

and was a professional basketball player in their West African home country, Maliki, 33, said there are 18 children in their family. They also use the last name Beidari. He said Omar has been living with him for nearly two years.

Omar Hamani was found dazed in a dirty subway bank on a street corner in the city's Mattapan section on Jan. 12 and brought to a hospital for treatment for a head injury. He told police at the time that the last thing he remembered was being thrown out of a car by three people.

Maliki Hamani said his brother left with three friends, saying he would be in Washington for only two days. He became concerned when Omar failed to return.

"One week after he is missing, I call his friends and they tell me he just spent one night in Washington, D.C., and then he was going to get a bus back to Greensboro," Maliki said. One friend said he took Omar to buy a bus ticket, and that was the last group saw of him.

Maliki doesn't know the friends' names, but said they think

they are all from Niger. He said he doesn't know why they went to Washington or how his brother ended up in Boston.

Caritas Carney Hospital discharged the man last Monday to a homeless center, but he later called a fellow patient he befriended from the psychiatric unit and asked for help. That woman called her sister, Stacy Maceachern, who invited the man to stay at her Westwood home until his memory returned or his loved ones came forward.

"I feel pretty great," Omar told Fox News on Sunday. "I'm happy. Finally I will get back home."

Maliki spoke to Omar via telephone during the broadcast, but the younger brother didn't recall anything about his family.

The family's concern now is how to pay for treatment of Omar's amnesia. Maliki was recently laid off and Omar didn't have a job, so the family — including Maliki's wife and young son — has no medical insurance.

Sending him back to Niger would be difficult because Omar wouldn't recognize his other relatives, and they don't have the money or access to medical care.

Screener fails to find butcher knife

The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — A security screener at Newark Liberty International Airport failed to spot a butcher knife in a passenger's pocketbook and was removed from the post for retraining, officials said.

Katrina Bell, 27, had cleared security and was waiting with her sister to board a flight on Saturday morning when she discovered she was carrying a knife.

Bell had put the knife in her bag "just in case" before going on a blind date earlier that week, her sister and travel companion, Kishika Bell Gownen, 30, said in The Sunday Star-Ledger of Newark.

"She said to me, 'Oh my God, I have this butcher knife in my pocketbook,'" Bell Gownen said. "My first thought was, 'They're going to think we're terrorists.'"

The North Carolina women immediately told airport personnel, who summoned police and officials of the Transportation Security Administration, which employs the screeners.

The women were not charged.

BY BRIAN WITTE
The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — Dontee Stokes, the man who alleges he was sexually molested by a now-defrocked priest, endured intense cross-examination last week from defense attorneys. As the prosecution's star witness, there may be more uncomfortable days ahead.

Last week, Stokes, 29, vividly described the abuse he says he suffered at the hands of Maurice Blackwell, whom he looked up to as a father figure in his boyhood and as an altar boy.

The defense suggested Stokes

has troubling distinguishing between fantasy and reality, and that he made up the allegations as a way of dealing with his own sexual identity crisis.

Testimony in the case against Blackwell was expected to resume Monday.

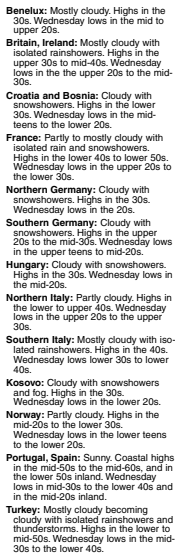
Blackwell is charged with four counts of child sex abuse. Stokes served home detention for accusing the former priest on a street in 2002 and shooting him. Blackwell survived.

Once a highly regarded pastor, Blackwell is accused of abusing Stokes between 1989 and 1992. If convicted, he faces up to 60 years in prison.

Stokes repeatedly told jurors the abuse never happened, saying, "Mr. Blackwell did what I said he did to me."

Stokes reported the alleged abuse in 1993, at age 17, but prosecutors declined to press charges. Stokes testified that he did not report the abuse earlier because he didn't want Blackwell to be re-cast as a hero of his stature in the community.

Blackwell was returned to the church after receiving psychological counseling. The priest was stripped of his church authority in 1998, after acknowledging having a sexual relationship with a teenage boy in the early 1970s. Blackwell was defrocked by the Vatican in October.



AFRICA			
	HI	LO	
Cape Town	82	64	Mogadishu
Nairobi	72	62	Nairobi
Freeport	86	76	Rabat
Kinshasa	90	72	Tripoli

MIDEAST			
	HI	LO	
Incirlik	50/36		
Ashgabad	42/11		
Mazar-e-Sharif	46/12		
Kabul	34/12		
Islamabad	57/38		
New Delhi			

	HI	LO		HI	LO
Amsterdam	38	28	Manila	84	73
Bahrain	64	50	Mexico City	73	56
Beijing	37	22	Montreal	36	10
Beirut	67	52	Riyadh	61	50
Bermuda	61	60	Rio de Jan	84	70
Caracas	86	73	Seoul	48	28
Helsinki	26	21	Sofia	40	24
Hong Kong	74	65	Sydney	84	71
Jakarta	79	65	Tokyo	79	40

[illegible]

A map of India with three locations marked by black dots. Each location is labeled with its name and a year value in a bold, sans-serif font. The locations and their values are: New Delhi (71/50), Hyderabad (94/68), and Bombay (90/70). The word 'INDIA' is printed in a smaller, all-caps font in the center of the map.

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	6:47AM	6:46AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	7:38AM	7:36AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:48PM	5:49PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	5:45PM	5:47PM

			
First qtr.	Full moon	Last qtr.	New moon

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every Saturday to find
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Autograph gouging

RI PROVIDENCE — Professional athletes who try to pad their million-dollar paychecks with paid autograph signings wouldn't be welcome in Rhode Island under legislation introduced.

Sen. Roger Badeau said he is fed up with athletes at large-scale autograph signing events charging up to \$100 for an autograph. What really irks him is that children have to pay for the signatures of their sports heroes.

"They get paid millions and millions. Where do we stop with this? It doesn't make sense," Badeau said. "It's not even realistic anymore."

Badeau's bill would ban professional athletes, entertainers or promoters from charging a fee for an autograph to a child younger than 16. They would be fined \$100 for each violation.

Officer arrested

TX FORT WORTH — A Fort Worth police officer has been arrested after a 15-year-old girl accused him of fondling her in his patrol car in November.

Officer J.D. Carter, 40, a nine-year veteran, was arrested and bonded on suspension of his license with a child/sexual contact. Carter, who was released after posting \$15,000 bail, has been placed on detached duty and is not allowed to carry a badge or a gun.

Carter's attorney, Bill Lane, called the allegations untrue. "It's a sad day," Lane said. "We've cooperated fully with the police department. It's strictly his case," she said.

Mr. Peanut honored

VA SUFFOLK — The home of the top-hat-wearing Mr. Peanut will honor the dapper goober with vehicle registration decals.

The cane-carrying symbol of the region's signature crop will be displayed on Suffolk's 2005 registration decals, which must be affixed to windshields.

It's the first time in Mr. Peanut's nearly 90-year history that Suffolk has used it on anything officially representing the city.

"He is recognized on Madison Avenue," said City Treasurer Ron Williams, who unveiled the decal to the City Council late last year. "He is respected on Wall Street. But he resides on Main Street in Suffolk. I can think of no better image to look out from the windshield of the vehicles in the city."

Bay Bridge repairs

MD ANNAPOLIS — Without saying who is to blame, a report released by an independent panel concluded that a combination of rushed work and inadequate planning was the cause of bungled repairs on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge.

At least \$7 million worth of re-paving work must be redone, and State Transportation Secretary Bob Flanagan said the project won't be finished by spring 2006, as originally planned.

Work began on about two miles of the bridge in 2002 and was esti-



mated to cost \$70 million.

The crux of the problem, the panel found, is that the long, thin westbound span of the bridge presented a more complex repair job than state officials, engineers and contractors planned.

Reimbursed flights

IL SPRINGFIELD — The director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources has pledged to repay the state \$2,000 for using state-owned aircraft to commute from his home and fly to charity-hunting trips in South Dakota.

Gov. Rod Blagojevich ordered Joel Brunsold to make the reimbursement after an Associated Press report showed Brunsold used planes and helicopters to fly to and from his home at least nine times and used state aircraft for special trips more than most government executives.

Brunsold, 62, planned to alter his practices to suit the governor, but he defended the use of the aircraft, saying he sometimes has to get to remote locations quickly to conduct agency business.

Religious suit dropped

HI HONOLULU — A federal judge has dismissed the U.S. Justice Department's religious dis-



25th anniversary

Students re-create the parade of athletes in Lake Placid, N.Y., as the village starts its celebration of the 25th anniversary of the 1980 Winter Olympics, which was held in the village.

crimination lawsuit against Maui County. U.S. District Judge Samuel King dismissed the lawsuit at the request of the Justice Department. The case was dropped because the underlying state lawsuit of a Maui church against the county has been settled.

King dismissed the federal lawsuit with prejudice, meaning it can't be filed again. He also ordered each side to pay its own legal costs.

County attorneys had wanted King to order the government to explain the basis of the lawsuit, which grew out of a land-use dispute and litigation involving Hale O Kaula church, which was denied a permit to build a worship center on agricultural land in Pukalani in 2001.

Helping meter readers

WV CHARLESTON — Appalachian Power is replacing 50,000 electric meters on Kanawha Valley homes with equipment that sends radio signals and allows readers to check meters without getting out of their car.

"It helps us be more efficient and accurate," spokeswoman Jeri Matheny said. "They're good for residential areas where you can drive down a block and read a number of meters at once."

They also improve safety, Matheny said.

"Our meter readers deal with dangerous dogs. They're just like the Postal Service when it comes to that," she said.

Instead of spinning dials, the new meters have digital readouts and are lighter than the electromechanical meters they replace.

Strong storm strikes

AZ PHOENIX — A strong storm lashed parts of Arizona with heavy rain, forcing authorities to close portions of four highways because of rock slides and flooding and driving dozens of people from threatened homes.

Some 40 residents of two mobile home parks in Puntkin Center, about 80 miles northeast of Phoenix, were evacuated because of rising water from Tonto Creek. People living east of the creek were stranded by flooding at low water crossings.

Some precautionary evacuations were ordered in at least three other communities for residents living near rivers.

Authorities blocked portions of four state highways near Globe because of rock slides and flooding. It is not clear when the roads would reopen.

Prison murder plot

CA CRESCENT CITY — The prison that houses some of California's most violent inmates will remain on lockdown for several weeks as authorities investigate what they call a "very sophisticated" plot to kill three guards.

Pelican Bay State Prison has been under a state of emergency since Feb. 4, when inmates alerted prison officials to the plot, spokesman Lt. Steven Ponzio said. He said investigators believe the plot was orchestrated by members of the Mexican Mafia, a well-organized prison gang.



Honoring those lost

Washington, D.C., firefighters Greg Thompson, left, and Donald Lee sign a commemorative 343 FDNY fire helmet in tribute to the 343 firefighters lost in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks during the National Lincoln Birthday Celebration at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington.



Win some, lose some

Allen Lassetter of Elm Mott, Texas, slides off his horse as the steer he was chasing abruptly turned. Lassetter was a participant in the steer wrestling competition during the San Antonio Rodeo.



Highway inferno

A fuel tanker truck burns in Davie, Fla. The 18-wheel tanker truck was driving onto a ramp from Interstate 595 to Florida's Turnpike when the driver lost control and the truck overturned, Florida Highway Patrol Lt. Pat Santangelo said. The truck, carrying 9,000 gallons of fuel, toppled onto a passenger vehicle, pinning it against a guardrail before bursting into flames.



Live and in concert

Legendary trumpet player Maynard Ferguson performs in concert, along with his band, The Big Bop Nouveau Band, in Easton, Pa.



Showing support

From left, Mason Smith, Blanch Smith, Dorothy Burnette and Everette Burnette show their support for Company B of the 391st Engineer Battalion, a York, S.C.-based U.S. Army Reserve company, which left for Afghanistan via Fort Bragg, N.C.

Wrong inmate freed

PA SCRANTON — Lackawanna County Prison officials botched a prisoner transfer and accidentally released the wrong inmate to a rehabilitation facility, where he walked away.

The whereabouts of Brian McDonald, 22, of the Bronx, N.Y., were unknown. Prison Warden Paul L. Jennings said. McDonald had been at Lackawanna County Prison since Jan. 4 on a parole violation, the warden said.

Dennis McDonald, 50, of Scranton, was the inmate who was supposed to be transferred to Keenan House, an Allentown rehabilitation facility, Jennings said. He had been in the prison after allegedly violating his parole.

Keenan House staff arrived at the prison with an order from the state Board of Probation and Parole to pick up Dennis McDonald, originally convicted on a drug charge, officials said.

Instead, the prison handed over Brian McDonald. "We gave them the wrong person — it (the mistake) was on our end," Jennings said.

Keenan House is a residential facility that allows patients to leave at their own will, which Brian McDonald did upon his arrival, Jennings said.

Sex offender arrested

CA CUPERTINO — A flurry of complaints about a woman in tight red shorts and a sports bra trespassing on middle-school campuses has led to the arrest of a registered sex offender who happens to be male.

Santa Clara County sheriff's deputies said Jeffery Stuart Poe, 43, had been arrested at his Sunnyvale home after witnesses who confronted a suspect at Kennedy Middle School in Cupertino chased him to his car and jotted down the license-plate number.

Police said the incidents began when a man disguised as a woman would slide up to groups of students at several South Bay schools.

Observant squirrel

A fox squirrel eyeballs a bird decal at the Everett H. Krueger Nature Center observation window at Highbanks Metro Park north of Columbus, Ohio.



Plan for basin

WY CASPER — The Bureau of Land Management was set to present its draft management plan for the 4.5 million-acre Great Divide Basin. The plan would guide management and resource development of the area for the next 20 years. The plan would allow more than 8,800 oil and gas wells to be drilled in the area, generating billions of dollars in mineral revenue.

Federal mediation

MO ST. LOUIS — The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's musicians and management agreed to federal mediation in a labor dispute that's forced 13 concert cancellations. Union members on Jan. 3 resoundingly rejected a four-year contract offer that required them to take a pay cut. The symphony is ranked among the nation's best, with six Grammy awards and 56 nominations.

Too many false alarms

CA FREMONT — With his city's police force poised to become the first in California to stop responding to most burglar alarms, insurance salesman Den-

nis Wolfe is urging fellow citizens to arm themselves.

"I absolutely believe everybody should own a gun in Fremont now," Wolfe said. "If the police aren't going to protect us, we have to protect ourselves."

Wolfe, 52, said he has been deluged with support since he began distributing letters and fliers urging residents to obtain permits to carry concealed weapons, suggesting how to shoot an intruder and have it ruled self-defense, and calling for a recall of Mayor Bob Wasserman if he doesn't rescind the policy, which takes effect Feb. 18.

Police Chief Craig Steckler announced the policy last month, saying more than 98 percent of Fremont's 7,000 annual alarm calls turn out to be false alarms. That costs \$600,000 in staffing, tying up police officers who could be dealing with other crimes, he said.

Under the new plan, officers will be verified by a witness or surveillance system. Police spokesman Detective Bill Vetteran called Wolfe's suggestions "absolutely ridiculous."

Pricey freight

AZ PHOENIX — Union Pacific Corp. is raising rates as much as 100 percent for some items being shipped into and out of Arizona.

The move could result in higher prices for industrial goods and construction materials. Shippers in Phoenix, which has one of the railroad's most congested freight yards, will face some of the stiffest hikes.

Survives plunge in ice

VT RUTLAND — A Rutland man survived his first ice fishing trip when his van plunged through the ice on Lake Champlain.

Joel Maranville's vehicle crashed through the ice about 100 yards from shore near Port Henry, N.Y.

Maranville, 46, was able to free himself from the van as it tumbled to the bottom of the lake. He spent several minutes clinging to loose pieces of ice until someone heard his cries for help and called rescuers, who were able to pull him out to safety using a rope. Maranville was treated for hypothermia.

A real shocker

VA RICHMOND — Chief Warrent Officer Edwin Murphy was too busy helping tsunami victims to check his \$100,000 winning lottery ticket, Virginia Lottery officials said.

Finally, nearly two weeks after the Jan. 15 drawing, Murphy checked his ticket and had won the top prize in the Cash 5 game.

"I was really pretty shocked," he told lottery officials when he claimed his prize. "I wasn't sure because I never win anything."

The lucky soldier purchased his winning ticket at a 7-Eleven in Woodbridge. The winning numbers were 4-9-14-18-32. Murphy had little time to think about lottery tickets, traveling to coordinate the movement of water, food and other materials for victims of the South Asia disaster. He is assigned to the Defense Logistics Agency at Fort Belvoir, and plans to retire in June after 30 years in the Army.

Stories and photos from wire services

FACES

Actors skate circles around each other

Woody Harrelson is taking ice skating lessons and Charlize Theron is doing her best to stay warm as they begin a new film.

"It's really beautiful but I am from Africa, which is a very hot continent," Theron said of Minnesota. She said she enjoyed watching a recent snowfall "from the inside of a house."

In the film, Theron plays a female miner who pursues a precedent-setting sexual harassment case. Harrelson is her hockey-playing lawyer, and he's taking skating lessons from a local high school coach.

"Currently, I suck," Harrelson said.

The film, which is still untitled, is directed by Niki Caro, who also directed the critically acclaimed "Whale Rider."



Theron

Russell Simmons joins KFC critics

Hip-hop impresario Russell Simmons has joined other celebrities and activists who have criticized KFC, saying he will call for a boycott if the company doesn't reform its slaughter practices.

Simmons called slaughter practices used by the fast-food chain's suppliers "grossly inhumane" and has filmed a commercial "showing some of the worst abuses chickens undergo" before they are served to customers, the New York Daily News reported Sunday.

Simmons, who is chairman of Def Jam Records and is a vegan, said he has talked to officials of Yum! Brands, the parent company of KFC, and said he will release the ad and start a boycott if the company does not reform its practices.

Other celebrities and activists who have raised their voices against KFC include the Rev. Al Sharpton, comedian and social activist Dick Gregory, actress Pamela Anderson and musician Paul McCartney.

Yum! Brands vice president Jonathan Blum disputed Simmons' claim.

'Crossfire' cancellation stirs shouting

A panel discussion on whether cable debate shows like CNN's recently canceled "Crossfire" have screamed themselves out of business ended in what else — a shouting match.

Panelists including comedian Janette Garofalo, conservative talk show host Laura Ingraham and former White House press secretary Joe Lockhart were alternately cheered and jeered at the U.S. Comedy Arts Festival in Aspen, Colo.

Garofalo ranked some audience members with her comment that not only does "the Republican message dominate the public conversation, but that in my opinion, 90 percent of it is false."

Ingraham retorted, "The American left is so unwilling to look inward to see what's wrong with their party."

The format may be part of the problem, said panel moderator Joe Scarborough, host of MSNBC's "Scarborough Country."

"If we had 1½ hours to debate Iraq, we'd have had a more nuanced discussion. How do you debate Iraq in three-and-one-half minutes?" he said.

The chase is on for Depardieu

French movie icon Catherine Deneuve was glad to see co-star Gerard Depardieu playing a man on an obsessive quest to regain his first love.

"It's true that obsessive love like that is generally something for women," she told reporters at the Berlin International Film Festival.

"It really touched me that Gerard Depardieu is a very sensitive and delicate person in that big shell of his."

The two star in "Les temps qui changent" (Changing Times), directed by Andre Techine. In the film, Depardieu's Antoine hopes to find Cecile, played by Deneuve, in Tangiers, Morocco, and win her back from her Moroccan husband.



Depardieu

Shy child to FEISTY actress

Graham's 'Gilmore Girls' success took a while to build

BY LUAINE LEE

Scripps Howard News Service

Few might guess that actress Lauren Graham, who plays the feisty Lorelai in "Gilmore Girls," was very shy as a kid.

"I masked it," she says. "I was always perceived to be tougher than I was. I had a sarcastic sense of humor. I remember at summer camp them thinking I was sassy or 'fresh' ... It was really my sense of humor, but people didn't take it the right way — which is funny — because that's exactly the character I play basically."

Being fresh and edgy has earned Graham a place in the annals of television.

While the luminous Graham might seem everyone's dream girl, she was quite the opposite in high school.

"I was awkward ... always self-conscious and didn't feel comfortable ... I was on the drill team one year, was in student government, but never identified myself as ... 'pretty.'"

Sitting across from her, "pretty" is the first thing you think of. But Graham surprises you. A bookish girl, she was reared by her father after her mother left to pursue her own career when Lauren was 5.

"Being raised by my dad was a defining feature of my life for sure because it was very unusual for there to be any single parents at the time, and especially a dad," she says. She started her college career at a conservatory for "artists," but backed out when she realized she needed to learn more academics.

She transferred to Barnard College in New York City, majoring in English, struggling through what she calls her "Ramen" days.

"I went to this really expensive school and looking back I think I should've gone to some Virginia state school," says Graham, 37.

Trying to be an actress in New York proved overwhelming.

"That was really the most baffling thing," she says. "I had at least two jobs trying to pay rent on this tiny, awful apartment ... I just thought this could take forever to get anyone to notice."

She applied for graduate school in Texas on a partial scholarship.

"When we graduated we did a showcase in New York and Chicago and I got an agent from that showcase," she says.

She didn't work as an actress for two years. "I taught test preps for the Princeton Review. That was a really a good job because it paid really well and was fairly flexible. I waited and ... did a combination of things."

She started emoting in commercials and the one she did for Cascade dishwashing soap kept her afloat for two years.

In Los Angeles she slept on her aunt's couch and scoured the papers for auditions. Surprisingly she was cast almost immediately in a TV pilot that never aired.

It took six years to rev up her career. When the chance at "Gilmore

Girls" came up, Graham was already committed to a sitcom called "MYOB." Luckily for her, it became a casualty of the ratings and she landed on "Gilmore Girls."

Emerging from a long-term relationship, Graham says she'd like to marry and have a family someday.



Garofalo



Lauren Graham, once a shy girl, breaks out of her shell as Lorelai Gilmore on the "Gilmore Girls."

Courtesy of The WB



Preparing the pooches

Owners and dogs get ready for Westminster show

BY ROY APPLETON
The Dallas Morning News

NEW YORK — With the big event kicking off Monday morning, Susie Williamson decided to seek some guidance, perhaps getting a leg up on the competition.

The Irving, Texas, woman and Dali, her Belgian Malinois, are here for the Westminster Kennel Club's annual dog show. As always, she will handle her champ in the ring. And Sunday morning she called on Joy Mason, an "animal communication specialist," in the basement of the Hotel Pennsylvania.

"I want to know if there's anything I do that frustrates her," Williamson asked the veterinarian and pet massage specialist, who for \$40 embarked on a 20-minute read of the grinning, attentive Dali, sitting before her in a pillowy chair.

Apparently not, replied Mason. "She's glad to be here. She understands the scene. She knows a lot's riding on the show." But Dali remains a little ticked, the therapist said, after failing to repeat last year as national Malinois champion. "She felt she got robbed by a woman judge."

The smiling Mason, from Pasadena, Calif., wasn't the only one working Sunday to help dogs and their people prepare for the 129th annual Westminster show.

The event, featuring 2,500 champions from 165 breeds, runs through Tuesday at Madison Square Garden.

Across 7th Avenue from the arena, the Hotel Pennsylvania was a show of its own Sunday. Pet taxis picked up and delivered guests, while leashed dogs of many a size, gait and coat loitered in the lobby or walked about.

Calif. GOP backs Arnold for 2006

The Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Although Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger has not revealed whether he will seek re-election, the California Republican Party changed a party rule and endorsed him 16 months before the 2006 gubernatorial primary.

Delegates at the state GOP convention on Sunday decided to make an exception to the party's policy of not endorsing candi-

dates before the primary elections so Republicans can pay some early expenses — such as bulk mailing and voter registration — should Schwarzenegger decide to run again.

"The Democratic Party is already raising money to field candidates for this office," said Karen Hanretty, a party spokeswoman. "To remain competitive, the party had to make this necessary, one-time rule change."

A voice vote on the endorsement was "overwhelmingly supportive of the governor," Hanretty said.

The proposal caused longtime Republicans activist Dora Kingsley to resign her seat on the party rules committee on Friday.

Kingsley, who did not attend Sunday's convention, said she thought making an exception for Schwarzenegger could result in the loss of voter confidence by discouraging challengers.

And in the basement, a canine massage therapist and holistic veterinarian worked near two Jog-a-Dog treadmills, both latching ribs, assorted vendors and groomers.

Not to forget Mason, who bakes herself to a conduit and says she uses "words, pictures and feelings" from animals to address their concerns or emotionally synchronize dog and handler before a show.

Drawing attention to the downstairs action is Gerry Grymek, the hotel's publicist and self-styled "doggie concierge." In the subterranean digs, even the most basic needs are met.

"We call this our canine loo," he says, surveying the scene inside the basement poopatory, with its separate His and Hers sawdust-covered relief areas. "Some of our owners take their dogs seriously and like it sectioned off," he says. "And a lot of the dogs are shy."

Besides a few trips to the basement, a walk and a visit with the reader, Dali spent Sunday in her pad overlooking Madison Square Garden. After sleeping on the bed, she was up by 8 a.m., played ball around the room, downed a few slices of breakfast bacon and later had the run of her place when Williamson dined out.

Williamson and Leffingwell say their dogs' chances are far from a walk in the park. And Mason, the communicator, offered perhaps a scoop Sunday while recalling some of Dali's litters and past performances.

"She's aware of the competition and knows what she needs to do to win, and she wants her mom to know that," Mason told an attentive Williamson, who wasn't sure what to make of the information.

"It's amazing," she said. "She said stuff she had no way of knowing. She couldn't have just pulled that out of the toilet."

75 years after discovery, 'planet' still up in the air

BY MICHELLE ROBERTS
The Associated Press

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — It's been 75 years since the discovery of Pluto, but it remains a mystery. Perhaps in another 10 years some of its secrets will be revealed when a space probe gets close enough for a good look.

Pluto was quickly heralded as the ninth planet in the solar system when it was spotted Feb. 18, 1930, by Clyde Tombaugh, a young amateur astronomer at Lowell Observatory. It still holds that title today, if somewhat tenuously.

"It's a misbehaving planet if you want to think about it as a planet," said Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of New York's Hayden Planetarium at the American Museum of Natural History.

Tyson provocatively removed Pluto from his exhibit of planets five years ago, lumping it instead with a belt of comets at the edge of the solar system.

"I still have folders of hate mail from third graders," he said. Pluto was discovered in a sedate, unheroic ritual ninth planet.

The 26-year-old Tombaugh was given the assignment. Had he not been so attentive, he might have missed Pluto as he stared through an eyepiece while switching back and forth between photographic images of the night sky over northern Arizona. But he be-

lieved right away the recurring speck he saw was the elusive Planet X later called Pluto.

Generations of schoolchildren grew up memorizing solar system charts that included Pluto. But shortly after Tombaugh died in 1997, some astronomers suggested that the International Astronomical Union, a professional as-

tronomers group, should demote the tiniest planet.

At the time it was discovered, Pluto was the only known object beyond Neptune in the solar system. When its moon, Charon, was spotted, that seemed to confirm Pluto's planet status.

But astronomers also have found about 1,000 other small icy objects beyond Neptune rotating around the sun. There may be as many as 100,000 of these bodies in what's called the Kuiper Belt, said Hal Butts, director of Lowell Observatory.

Pluto, with its elongated orbit and odd orbital plane, seems to behave more like other Kuiper Belt objects than other planets, some astronomers say. They also point out Pluto is very small, smaller than Earth's moon.

"You start to see where Pluto fits in better with Kuiper objects," said Hal Weaver, project scientist on the New Horizons mission, which hopes to launch a probe to Pluto next year, possibly reaching it as early as 2015.

Pluto

What's In A Name? Pluto is also the name of the Roman god of the underworld. It was suggested by many people, but credit was given to an 11-year-old girl from England.

Mickey Mouse's Dog? Mickey's dog, though yet unnamed, made his debut in 1930 — the same year the planet made its debut to earthlings. Pluto, the Disney character, was named the following year.

A Big Secret: Clyde Tombaugh said he knew right away the specks he was looking at were evidence of Planet X, but the observatory director thought

they should be cautious. So Tombaugh went to dinner and waited for midnight on Feb. 18, 1930. But it was cloudy,

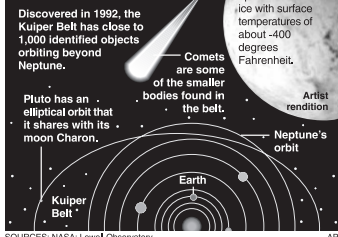
so even though he killed another couple of hours at the local theater watching "The Virginian," he was not able to get more proof of Pluto that night.



Tombaugh

Some question Pluto's planet status

Friday marks 75 years since Clyde Tombaugh discovered the icy planet of Pluto. Its planet status has been questioned, and research suggests it may be part of a group of objects in the Kuiper Belt.



SOURCES: NASA, Lowell Observatory

OPINION

OPINION

Neither party wants to halt era of big government

Less than a decade ago, President Clinton declared that "the era of big government is over." Clinton didn't mean it, of course. But now we know that the Republicans who cheered Clinton's words of Jan. 27, 1996, didn't really mean to end big government either.

Back then Clinton was describing a proposed federal budget of \$1.64 trillion. [Last week], President Bush proposed a budget that spends \$2.57 trillion. And yet even that enormous sum doesn't include the costs of the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, currently running about \$80 billion a year. Nor does it include any so-called transition costs for a partial privatization of Social Security.

Meanwhile, reports suggest that the new prescription drug benefit might cost \$1.2 trillion over the coming decade, triple the \$400 billion projected by the White House when the benefit was enacted in 2003. For its part, the administration says that the \$1.2 trillion figure is too high; it estimates the cost of the benefit as "only" \$720 billion. But even if that lower figure proves true, the drug program's cost will have soared 80 percent in less than two years — and that's before it's even begun.

The point is that nobody really knows the true burden of these open-ended entitlement programs. The one safe assumption is that government subsidy programs ratchet upward, not downward.

We might consider, as a cautionary tale, the fate of agriculture spending over the past decade. In 1996, the congressional Republicans, espousing a libertarian line, persuaded Clinton to sign the Freedom From Farm Act, targeting payments to farmers.

Then-Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich took credit for "ending the subsidies after 60 years."

It was a great idea; if the government is going to shrink, surely money to corporate farms should be shunk first.

But a funny thing happened on the way to small government. In the first year after the farm law passed, Department of Agriculture spending dipped a bit, from \$53.12 billion to \$49.55 billion. But then traditional farm-state bondpolo politics kicked back in. By 2001, at the end of Clinton's presidency, USDA spending had jumped to \$74.8 billion. And at the end of Bush's first term, it jumped even higher, to \$93 billion.

But now, after overseeing a 24 percent increase in agriculture spending over the past four years, Bush pledges to reduce agriculture spending over the next four years. Do we have any reason, looking at the fiscal track record, to believe that will happen?

In fairness to Bush, we must say that the president shares control over spending with Congress. Sen. Thad Cochran of cotton-pickin' Mississippi, the third-ranking Republican on the Agriculture Committee — and, more to the point, the chairman of the all-powerful Appropriations Committee — reacted to The Washington Post's story about Bush's proposed Agriculture budget: "Frankly, I don't think anyone in the administration really thought Congress would go along with this."

And of course, the Democrats, as a party, have rarely met a domestic spending program they didn't want to increase. On Fox News, Sen. Joe Lieberman, D-Conn., said flatly that the ultimate budget, as enacted,



would include domestic spending totals "not anywhere near what the president submitted to us." That is, the Democrats will treat the administration's proposals as a floor, and build high from there.

Bush is likely to be OK with that. He was never part of the anti-government Republicanism of the Gingrich era. In 2000, he campaigned on a platform of "compassionate conservatism"; compassion, of course, being defined as greater gobs of government.

Indeed, Bush has never vetoed a single

bill from Congress.

So now we have what might be called "wartime conservatism." Bush reasons that at a time when he is fighting in two countries, this is a time for national unity — and national unity, like compassion, necessitates more federal largesse for everyone, so that everyone feels included in Uncle Sam's porky hug.

So yes, big government is back, with red-inky vengeance. Although in truth that era never really ended.

James Plunkert is a (New York) Newsday columnist.

In Europe, Rice re-employed pre-emptive intelligence

BY JOHN HALL

Media General

HER first trip abroad as secretary of state seems to have been a triumph for Condoleezza Rice, despite a couple of jarring moments for those who fear a wider American war in the Islamic world.

Rice, at 50, moved gracefully among mostly senior, mostly stouter and mostly male European leaders. They seemed charmed by her and they were able to aside some of their past differences over the Iraq war, at least for now.

Rice didn't seem to mind a headline calling her "coquettish."

"I will do what I do," she told NBC News. "I'm a package. I'm who I am, and that includes being female."

If the package also includes a steel-magnolia mind, that is to the good. But some of her critics are wondering whether a new secretary of state on a fence-mending expedition should have been a little less tough.

Her predecessor, Colin Powell, had a way of calming down the continent even at the height of the storm over the Iraq invasion and the French-German refusal to back a United Nations resolution of support.

But Rice, on her first trip, seemed determined to stir up another hornet's nest. Get tougher on Iran, she warned the French, British and Germans, who are conducting slow-moving negotiations to prevent Iran's nuclear program from becoming a weapons program.

While setting no deadline, she said the talks could not go on for forever and she warned that the United States would soon apply to the United Nations for sanctions on Iran. In the background, Vice President Dick Cheney has been giving interviews and

speeches warning that a nuclear-armed Iran would be intolerable.

Rice said attacking Iran was "not on the agenda at this point." The use of the words "at this point" implies that at some point it will be in order, and Rice, a Stanford scholar, is a woman who chooses words carefully.

That brought a swift rebuke from David Kay, an arms inspector who headed the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Writing in The Washington Post (the column appeared in Stars and Stripes' Feb. 9 edition), he saw an "eerie similarity" to the buildup toward trouble in Iraq and the events that preceded the Iraq war.

In addition to Cheney's and Rice's remarks, a stream of reports from Iranian exiles has begun to appear about Iran's attempt to acquire nuclear weapons. And there are reports of U.S. covert surveillance activities in Iran.

It was Kay who told the Senate Armed Ser-

vices Committee that "we were almost all wrong" in concluding before the Iraq war that Iraq likely had weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons.

This time, the mistake should be avoided. A "cooked document to justify the threat of military action" should not be accepted from the intelligence community, he said. Any assessment of Iran's nuclear weapons capabilities should not be led "by a team that is trying to prove a case for its boss."

These were powerful words from one of the nation's foremost scientists on weapons of mass destruction. Not long ago, President Bush and Rice, as his national security adviser, thought enough of Kay to put him in charge of the effort to find the weapons of mass destruction in Iraq after the fall of Baghdad.

The administration selected Kay because he was a hard-nosed arms control inspector who had been critical of U.N. inspectors for

not looking closely enough. But Kay and his survey group could find nothing because there was nothing. And when he told Congress that there had been a major intelligence failure before the invasion, it was a bitter moment of truth for the nation.

Kay says he is now hearing déjà vu sounds on Iran. What he doubts is not the danger of Iran having nuclear weapons, but "the ability of the U.S. government to honestly assess Iran's nuclear status." That is because the policy-makers appear still to be driving the intelligence.

A top-level independent commission is due to issue its report on the Iraqi intelligence failure soon. Whether or not mixing policy with intelligence will be part of its assessment of what went wrong isn't known. But Rice's statement on Iran sounds at this point like pre-emptive intelligence remains the practice.

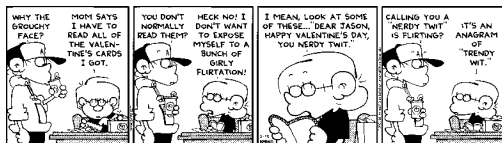
John Hall is the senior Washington correspondent of Media General News Service.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



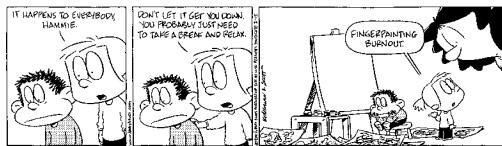
Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



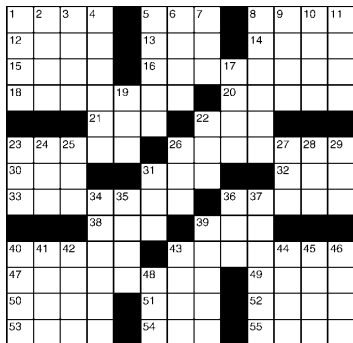
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Lovers recipe
- 5 Biz deg.
- 8 Differently
- 12 Bleacherties' choreography
- 13 Branch
- 14 "Off rent Strokes"
- 15 Figure-skating torch
- 16 Con
- 18 Hunter's companion
- 20 Staffers
- 21 Listening device
- 22 Hostel
- 23 Lightheartedly silly
- 26 "Consume it all!"
- 30 Dined
- 31 Enjoyment
- 32 Deterioration
- 33 Turned, as milk
- 36 Chamer's snake
- 38 Clark or Rogers
- 39 In favor of
- 40 Plankton, in part
- 43 Fast traveler?
- 47 Bygone moviehouse offering
- 49 From square one
- 50 Dangling locale
- 51 "Of course"
- 52 Singer Turner
- 53 Straight flush, e.g.
- 54 Prior to
- 55 Vortex

Down

- 1 Mop
- 2 Cab
- 3 Incessantly
- 4 Used an acetylene
- 5 Main course of study
- 6 Boast
- 7 Partisan pal
- 8 In recession
- 9 Deposited
- 10 Paddock papa
- 11 Tackles' teammates
- 17 Ring k.d.
- 19 Rotation duration
- 22 Saturn auto model
- 23 Joke
- 24 Judge Lance
- 25 Hideaway
- 26 Flip
- 27 Scepter topper
- 28 Neither mate
- 29 Greek vowel
- 31 Across Way
- 34 Obliterated
- 35 Dutch South African
- 36 Massachusetts cape
- 37 Highly decorated
- 39 Perjurious
- 40 Egyptian cross
- 41 Horne or Olin
- 42 Stefani of No Doubt
- 43 "Cheers" supply
- 44 Oklahoma city
- 45 Make one's way
- 46 Vacillate
- 48 Keep tabs on

Answer to Previous Puzzle



2-15

CRYPTOQUIP

ECW UNLJ RPMXPBX
VDBRW JRHNZEDPXXWJZL.
R UNXJJ EYXL CXVX WP EYX

J D H X C D M X Z X P U E Y .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A DOCTOR WAS A GENIUS AT BANDAGING, HE COULD BE CALLED "THE WIZARD OF GAUZE."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals S

Abuse should be stopped quickly

Dear Abby: I'm 23 and involved with a man who is younger than I am. When we started our relationship, he was awesome and very kind. Now, six months later, he has changed. He is always yelling at me and telling me what to do. When I do what he says, it's still not right, or good enough.

After we were together for one month, we moved back to my home in New Mexico, and that's when the problems started. At first, it was only name-calling. I have tried to break up with him, but he won't let me. He keeps me awake, and won't let me leave the room to go to the bathroom or get a drink of water until I agree to stay with him. He has even laid his hands on me at times.

He throws it in my face that he can't leave because he has nowhere to go since we're so far from his home. Abby, he's the one who wanted to come here. I'm afraid of him.

I'm convinced he will seriously hurt me sooner or later.

—**Scared in New Mexico**

Dear Scared: So am I, because his abuse is escalating. Pick up the phone and call the toll-free number of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-7233.

They will help you formulate an escape plan. Please do not wait — do it today.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: A couple of nights ago, my husband, "Irving," and I went out to dinner with "Ray," a friend of his who was visiting from out of town. This morning, I stumbled upon an instant message Irving had left open on his computer between himself and Ray. I couldn't help but see the first sentence my hubby had written. He was commenting on the number of "hot, hot" women at the restaurant.

I know I shouldn't have, but I went on to read the message. I couldn't stop myself. It described

one woman in particular whom he found attractive, a tall blonde two tables over, directly in his line of sight.

Abby, I was floored — shocked! Irving has always told me I'm the most beautiful woman in the world to him, but after reading his comments, I feel I've been lied to all along. I have no doubt that Irving has always been loving and faithful. But I'm upset and angry over this and wonder if I should say something or let it slide. Am I overreacting? Was this just man-talk and men being harmless?

—**Mad Anyhow in California**

Dear Mad Anyhow: There's an expression, "Boys will be boys," but in this case it was men acting like boys. Do not get mad — just smile and say, "Irving, you left the window open and the cat is out of the bag." That should be revenge enough.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uxpress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate.

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter at each square, to form four ordinary words.

GEDUN
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

DYNOW
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

NOPETT
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

NAYYAW
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Answer: THEM

Yesterday's Jumbles: ALIVE SAVOR BLITHE KNIGHT

Answer: Many will do this on Valentine's Day — TAKE IT TO "HEART"

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Mother-in-law disregards allergies

Dear Annie: My mother-in-law, "Marley," has me worried. Two years ago, Marley married a doctor and moved west to live with him. Her husband has a 50-ish daughter, a "Carrie," who is quite close to her father. Carrie claims to have severe food allergies.

Marley told me that it irritates her when Carrie comes over and eats from their fridge, so she has started chipping up some of these sensitive foods and putting them into soups and such, which Carrie then innocently eats.

Marley hasn't told her husband, because he will tell Carrie. Over the holidays, Marley came to visit us. In one of our conversations, I mentioned that my 12-year-old daughter and I share an allergy to walnuts. Yet, for our holiday dinner, Marley made a dessert with crushed walnuts in the crust and didn't tell us. At first, I ate a bite and noticed my mouth was on fire. I told my daughter not to eat any. I then reminded

Annie's Mailbox



Marley that we are allergic, and not 10 minutes later, she held out a piece of this same dessert and told my daughter to "have some."

My husband doesn't want to believe his mother would intentionally hurt his family, but I'm not so sure. Yesterday, Marley sent our family a box of cookies that contained ground walnuts. What should I do?

—**Allergic and Angry**
Dear Allergic: We might have thought this was accidental, except for the fact that Marley confided she was deliberately giving her stepdaughter reactive foods. Either Marley erroneously believes allergies are faked and she is determined to prove it, or she is homicidal. Whichever, the woman sounds seriously deranged.

Your husband (or you, if he refuses) should talk to Marley's husband, the doctor, and tell him what she is doing. Ask him to see

that Marley gets a complete physical and some education about allergic reactions.

Dear Annie: Your advice to "Scared to Death," whose husband accesses incest porn via the computer, needs to include another component. Cybersex is, by virtue of its content and means of access, highly addictive. Certainly, this individual could benefit from therapeutic assistance. Please tell him to check with the Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health to find a qualified counselor in his area.

—**Elsbery W. Reynolds, CSAT, Idylwild, Calif.**

Dear Elsbery Reynolds: Thank you for your expert assistance. Anyone interested in contacting SASH can do so at ncsc.org or by writing P.O. Box 725544, Atlanta, GA 31139.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



"I'd never forget to brush my teeth if they had chocolate toothpaste."



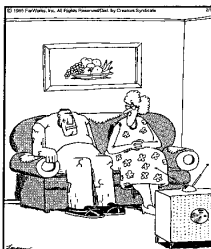
Domis the Menace



"BUT, MOM! I ONLY WANTED TO SEE HER TALK OUT OF THE OTHER SIDE OF HER MOUTH."

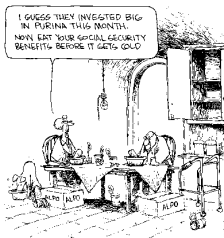
© Gary Larson

The Far Side



"You're a hard man. Bud."

Non Sequitur



I GUESS THEY INVESTED BIG IN PURINA THIS MONTH. NOW LET YOUR SPECIAL SECURITY BENEFITS BEFORE IT GETS GOOD.

© 2005

© 2005

Malone: 'You will not see me play again'

BY DOUG ALDEN
The Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY — Karl Malone still looks capable of playing in the NBA.

The knee injury that kept him out for half of last season is healed and the muscles that bulge from beneath his T-shirt indicate he's keeping up with his three-hour daily workouts.

But mentally, Malone said he doesn't have the will to endure the rigors of a 20th season, even just for a few months to try to win his first NBA title. He has had enough.

"I have retired. You will not see me play again. That is a promise," Malone said Sunday during a news conference. "There will be no unbelievable comebacks."

It was an unbelievable career. The 41-year-old Malone retires as the No. 2 scorer in NBA history, spending 18 seasons in Utah and one with the Los Angeles Lakers while trying to cap his career with a championship.

He visited San Antonio last week and talked with the Spurs about signing on for a playoff run, but said the "spark" he had always had to play was no longer there.

"When I got on that plane, I knew I was done, that it was time," Malone said.

He said he wanted to keep from getting too emotional Sunday, and he succeeded. He started off by thanking the Jazz, coach Jerry Sloan and former teammates before team owner Larry Miller reminded him he hadn't yet actually said why he was back in the Salt Lake Center.

"I come here very humble as a man and as a player," Malone said. "I am honored to be here today because this is where I started. This is a team that took a chance on a young man from Louisiana — I don't think they ever watched me play a game."

An avid outdoorsman, Malone sported a cowboy hat as he spoke about a future involving plenty of hunting and fishing and maybe someday a job back in basketball. But it won't be as a player. He's already ready one he could on the court.



Karl Malone is reminded by Utah Jazz owner Larry Miller to explain why they held a news conference — to announce the player's retirement — on Sunday.

Malone was the league's MVP in 1997 and '99. One of the most durable players ever, he is second to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar in scoring and minutes played. Malone's 14,968 rebounds rank sixth on the career list and he also was a 14-time All-Star selection, winning the game MVP in 1989 and sharing it with longtime teammate John Stockton in 1993.

The Malman also won Olympic gold medals in 1992 and '96. About the only thing missing in his career is a title ring, which he missed out on in all three of his trips to the NBA Finals. Malone and Stockton led the Jazz to the 1997 and '98 Finals, losing to Michael Jordan and the Chicago Bulls each time.

He had another shot with the Lakers last season, but was hobbled with a knee injury as the Detroit Pistons beat Los Angeles in five games.

"I wanted a championship. I'm not going to lie to you. That was my ultimate goal, but that was a team goal. That wasn't an individual goal," he said.

Malone said he chose Sunday to retire to honor his mother on what would have been her 67th birthday. Shirley Jackson Malone died in August 2003 and Malone said he still hasn't recovered emotionally.

The consummate power forward, Malone teamed with Stockton for 18 seasons with Utah, forming one of the NBA's greatest duos. Malone said Stockton, who retired in 2003 as the NBA's career leader in assists and steals, was one of the first people he called last week to say he was finished.

Bronze sculptures of Stockton and Malone are in the works and will stand outside the arena. Stockton's No. 12 was retired in November and Malone's No. 32 will follow next season.

"I wish he would have played another year here," Malone said, referring to Stockton. "I would have played another year with him."

Heat claim first win over Western leader

BY TIM REYNOLDS
The Associated Press

MIAMI — The one thing consistently eluding the Miami Heat this season was a big victory over a legitimate Western Conference contender.

Dwyane Wade and Shaquille O'Neal crossed their off their to-do list on Sunday.

Wade scored 13 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter and O'Neal finished with 27, sending Miami to a 96-92 victory over San Antonio in a matchup of the NBA's conference leaders. It was the Heat's first victory over the Spurs since Feb. 1, 2002.

"It's a big win," said Wade, who hit five of his final seven shots and added six assists and five rebounds. "Everything didn't go smooth for us, but what's important is we beat a great team."

The Heat moved to 39-14, a record fattened by a 27-4 mark against East rivals. Miami has been mediocre against the West, and was 0-6 against its top four teams — San Antonio, Phoenix, Seattle and Dallas.

Not anyone. Turns out, the Heat can hang with the league's elite.

"I don't know if it was a statement game," said Miami's Udonis Haslem, who grabbed 11 rebounds. "There's a lot more games to be played. Right now, we just want to build on it. We'll call it a building game."

Said Spurs coach Stan Van Gundy: "That is the best I have felt about our team in a long time."

Eddie Jones, playing despite a bruise on his left index finger, was the first quarter, had 12 points for

Miami, which shot 52.2 percent from the floor compared to 39.2 percent by San Antonio. Damon Jones had 11 points and was 3-for-4 from three-point range — including one that put Miami up for good with 3:06 left.

Manu Ginobili had 24 points for San Antonio, which shot 52.9 percent (9-for-17) from three-point range, and just 35.5 percent (22-for-62) inside the arc. Tony Parker had 22 points and Tim Duncan finished with 20 and nine rebounds for the Spurs.

"They had some huge three's and a lot of fast-break points in the fourth quarter," said Parker, who has scored 20-plus points in five straight games, his longest such streak in two years. "We made too many mistakes."

The matchup was a classic back-and-forth contest, with 22 lead changes, 22 ties and neither team leading by more than six points.

Ginobili's layup with 4:15 left put the Spurs ahead 85-83, but Miami answered with a 10-2 run over the next 2.42 Wade's driving layup with 1:33 left put Miami ahead 93-92 and the Heat seemed in control.

Ginobili, though, scored the next five points to draw the Spurs within one before Wade hit a jumper with 25.1 seconds left to seal Miami's sixth straight victory.

"It was a good game," said Spurs coach Gregg Popovich, who'll oppose Van Gundy again next Sunday in the All-Star Game. "Both teams did a real good job and down the stretch Dwyane Wade hit a couple of real huge shots. We all saw them; they were great."

Coaching switch doesn't change Timberwolves' luck

BY DAVE CAMPBELL
The Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Kevin McHale moved in for a closer look at the struggling Minnesota Timberwolves, knowing full well that his new title will not, by any means, guarantee a quick fix.

"Let's see lots and lots of stuff to clean up," McHale said Sunday after his debut as Minnesota's coach, an 87-83 loss to the Chicago Bulls.

The Timberwolves (25-27), expected to build off their appearance in last season's Western Conference finals and contend for an NBA title, have been perhaps the league's most disappointing team.

With no signs of consistency or improvement, McHale, the team's vice president of

basketball operations, decided to fire his longtime friend, Flip Saunders. Minnesota remains only 1½ games behind the Los Angeles Lakers for the West's final playoff spot, so there's still time to salvage something from this season.

Of course, not too many teams with championship aspirations change coaches in February.

Is it too late?

"We can't think like that," point guard Troy Hudson said. "We're definitely off the track as far as where we want to be, but we still have a lot of games left."

McHale, who has no coaching experience, was on the bench for the first time since his Hall of Fame career with the Boston Celtics ended in 1993. He looked a little out of his element, wearing a long gray

sport coat over a black mock turtle-neck — occasionally leaving his chair to talk to a player on the court.

Shouting from the bench, he was mostly encouraging — though clearly frustrated by the outcome. The energy level was acceptable, but this team is still not functioning properly: not rebounding well enough, not running the fast break effectively, not taking smart shots.

"We have a long way to go," McHale said.

His first priority, however, is to re-install a consistent fire in this bunch that has looked listless on several occasions. Though he said he wished Saunders was still coaching, McHale vowed to bring a more confrontational style to the sideline.

"I just want guys that will play hard and

compete," McHale said. "If you compete and fight, good things will happen."

Players, just like Saunders himself, were surprised by Saturday's news. Many of them were sorry to see him go, though they pledged to forge ahead — a sentiment shared by veteran Glen "Big Boy" Davis. "Is this really all Flip's fault?" Taylor said. "It certainly isn't. But who can you change?"

The Timberwolves have been trying to make a trade and still might do that before the league's Feb. 24 deadline, but nothing was panning out in that area — and a switch on the bench became the best option.

"I believe that he exhausted all the things that he knew to try to motivate this team," Taylor said. "And I'm not saying it is Flip's fault, but I don't know what other alternative we had."



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NBA scoreboard

Eastern Conference				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	26	50	—	—
Philadelphia	26	50	—	—
New York	22	43	34 1/2	1 1/2
Toronto	20	45	31 1/2	3 1/2
New Jersey	20	43	32	5 1/2
Southeast Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	29	36	—	—
Orlando	26	40	69 1/2	—
Toronto	27	38	71	—
Washington	18	50	26 1/2	10 1/2
Atlanta	19	50	27	12 1/2
Central Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Detroit	30	39	61 1/2	—
Chicago	24	45	51 1/2	—
Minnesota	23	51	51	—
Milwaukee	23	48	49 1/2	—
Western Conference				
Southwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	33	33	—	—
Dallas	33	33	—	—
Phoenix	28	37	57 1/2	—
Memphis	28	37	57 1/2	—
New Orleans	28	37	57 1/2	—
Northwest Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Seattle	31	34	47 1/2	—
Minnesota	27	47	36 1/2	—
Portland	25	49	33 1/2	—
Utah	23	49	31 1/2	—
Pacific Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Phoenix	32	33	49 1/2	—
Sacramento	31	34	47 1/2	—
Golden State	28	37	43 1/2	—
L.A. Clippers	28	37	43 1/2	—
Golden State	27	38	41 1/2	—
Sunday's games				
Miami 98, San Antonio 92				
Chicago 100, Minnesota 94				
Cleveland 101, L.A. Lakers 88				
Toronto 104, Boston 100				
Indiana 76, Memphis 73				
Toronto 109, L.A. Clippers 106				
New York 102, Charlotte 99				
San Antonio 98, Houston 94				
New Jersey 84, Denver 79				
Monday's games				
San Antonio 98, Golden State 102				
Houston 81, Portland 80				
Tuesday's games				
New York at Philadelphia				
Portland at Charlotte				
Washington at New Orleans				
Wednesday's games				
Utah at Portland				
Denver at Atlanta				
New Jersey at Minnesota				
San Antonio at Chicago				
Washington at Houston				
L.A. Lakers at Dallas				
Dallas at Golden State				
Atlanta at Cleveland				
Portland at Indiana				
Detroit at Philadelphia				
San Antonio at Boston				
Sacramento at New Jersey				
San Antonio at New Orleans				
Milwaukee at New York				
San Antonio at Seattle				

Sunday

Hud, Spurs 92

San Antonio				
	W	L	Pct	GB
San Antonio	28	32	46 1/2	—
Portland	27	33	44 1/2	—
Three-Point Goals—San Antonio 9 (2) (Clark, 4; Brown, 4); Portland 10 (3) (Gardner 3, 1; Givens 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Rebounds—San Antonio 5 (3) (Duncan 3, 1; Brown 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Assists—San Antonio 4 (Nesterovic 1, 1; Brown 1, 1; Duncan 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Steals—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Blocks—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Minutes—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Points—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Shots—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Free Throws—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Technical Fouls—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Flagrant Fouls—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
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Writing—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Yacht—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Yoga—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Youth—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Zeppelin—San Antonio 2 (Duncan 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				

Bulls 87, Timberwolves 83

Chicago				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Chicago	28	41	40 1/2	—
Portland	27	33	44 1/2	—
Three-Point Goals—Chicago 4 (Horton 2, 1; Givens 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Rebounds—Chicago 5 (Horton 2, 1; Brown 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Assists—Chicago 4 (Horton 2, 1; Brown 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Steals—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Blocks—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Minutes—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Points—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
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Substitutions—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
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Sponsorship—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
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Yacht—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Yoga—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Youth—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Zeppelin—Chicago 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				

Cavaliers 103, Lakers 89

L.A. Lakers				
	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Lakers	25	40	38 1/2	—
Portland	27	33	44 1/2	—
Three-Point Goals—L.A. Lakers 5 (Horton 2, 1; Givens 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Rebounds—L.A. Lakers 5 (Horton 2, 1; Brown 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Assists—L.A. Lakers 4 (Horton 2, 1; Brown 1, 1; Givens 1, 1).				
Steals—L.A. Lakers 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Blocks—L.A. Lakers 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Minutes—L.A. Lakers 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
Points—L.A. Lakers 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				
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Zeppelin—L.A. Lakers 2 (Horton 1, 1; Brown 1, 1).				

Nets 94, Nuggets

Healing Heels

N. Carolina shakes off heartbreak of Duke loss with win over UConn

By JIM O'CONNELL

The Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. — Minutes after their latest victory, the North Carolina Tar Heels were still talking about their last loss.

Rashed McCants and Raymond Felton had big second halves Sunday to help No. 2 North Carolina beat No. 19 Connecticut 77-70. It was the Tar Heels' first game since Wednesday night's 71-70 loss at No. 7 Duke, a game that ended with North Carolina failing to get off a shot on its last possession.

"Needless to say, we feel a heck of a lot better than we did Wednesday night," North Carolina coach Roy Williams said. "I talked a great deal about getting that bad taste out of my mouth. We did some nice things today."

Like take over in the second half on both ends of the court.

McCants had 11 of his 15 points in the second half for North Carolina and Felton had 14 of his 16 points and seven of his 10 assists in the final 20 minutes.

The Tar Heels committed only four turnovers in the second half while forcing the Huskies into 13 of their 22.

"We gave in to great defense. We came apart," Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun said. "We weren't mentally tough enough to stay in our offense and the turnovers led to fast-break baskets."

McCants, Felton and classmate Sean May, who had 16 points and 13 rebounds, made the differ-

ence. The performances by the junior stars enabled the Tar Heels (20-3) to walk away with smiles on their faces instead of the stunned looks they were after the last-play breakdown at Duke.

"It's big. It just shows how much more mature we are as a team and it showed our poise," Felton said. "We just came off a loss. Everybody was still kind of upset about the situation, but we had to come out and play against a big-time team in a big-time place."

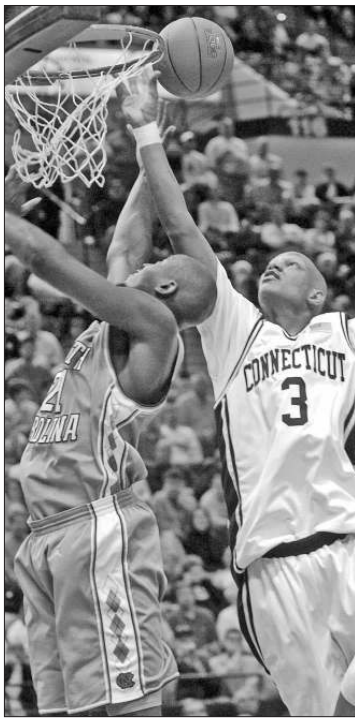
Marcus Williams had 18 points for the Huskies (15-6), who had won three straight games and four of five.

"Their wings did a great job denying and they were able to get right into their offense," said Williams, who didn't

practice much during the week because of strep throat. "Playing Felton the whole game and pushing the ball took a lot out of me. I'm tired."

Connecticut led 34-31 after a first half that was played at the pace comfortable for the Huskies. The second half was more to the liking of the Tar Heels, who lead the nation in scoring at 91.2 points per game.

Felton hit a three-pointer with 12:10 left to break the game's final tie and give North Carolina a 51-48 lead. That started a 16-6 run that was capped with McCants' only three-pointer of the game that made it 64-54 with 7:54 to go.



North Carolina's Jawad Williams and Connecticut's Charlie Villanueva reach for a loose ball during Sunday's game at Hartford, Conn. No. 2 North Carolina took control in the second half and won 77-70.

"I talked a great deal about getting that bad taste out of my mouth. We did some nice things today."

Roy Williams

North Carolina coach

Beavers drop Huskies from Pac-10 lead

By ANNE M. PETERSON

The Associated Press

CORVALLIS, Ore. — Oregon State was embarrassed last time it played Washington.

The Beavers were determined not to let it happen again, especially at home.

"We felt we were being paid back," senior guard J.S. Nash said. "It was an emotional game and I've never lost by 40. It was on a lot of our minds."

A month after a 108-68 shellacking in Seattle, Oregon State rose up and stunned the 11th-ranked Huskies 90-73 on Sunday.

David Lucas scored 17 of his 23 points in the second half and finished with 10 rebounds for Oregon State.

The Huskies (20-4, 10-3 Pac-10) had their four-game winning streak halted and fell out of a first-place tie with Arizona atop the conference standings.

"They played extremely well," Washington coach Lorenzo Romar said. "We didn't come to fight. We should have come with more fight than we had today."

The Beavers (14-9, 6-6) haven't had as many victories since his 1991-92 season. Oregon State has won three straight overall and improved its home record to 10-1. "It was a big win for us," Oregon State coach Jay John said. "I can't remember the last time Oregon State was 6-6 in the Pac-10 with six to go."

Brandon Roy scored 25 points for Washington, which shot just 41.2 percent from the floor and missed 23 of 27 from three-point range.

Lamar Hurd's fast-break layup gave the Beavers an 89-73 lead with less than 2 minutes left, and the crowd was on its feet. The ovation continued until fans spilled onto the court after the final buzzer.

"We were just negligent," Roy said. "We beat them so bad I think some guys thought we were going to cruise for a victory."

When the teams met last month in Seattle, Oregon State not only lost the game but also its coach. John was hospitalized after complaining of chest pains and shortness of breath at the half. He was diagnosed with hypertension and missed the game.

The Beavers played Sunday as if they were determined not to be humiliated again.

Oregon State mounted its challenge late in the first half. Leading 35-34, the Beavers went on a 7-0 run, capped by Chris Stephens' three-pointer, to make it 42-34. The lead was 43-37 at the break and any Washington comeback hopes were dashed when Oregon State scored the first eight points of the second half to lead by 15.

Nick DeWitz's dunk put Oregon State ahead 66-50. A 12-5 run got the Huskies within 71-62, but the Beavers weren't rattled and moved out to a 76-64 lead on a three-pointer by Stephens.

DeWitz finished with 20 points, Nash had 18 and Stephens added 17.

"I think everyone on the team played awesome," DeWitz said. "It was 100 percent non-stop."

Tre Simmons was the only other Husky in double figures, finishing with 15 points.

Washington was coming off a 95-88 overtime victory over Oregon on Thursday night. Will Conroy hit a three-pointer with less than a minute left to sent the game into an extra period.

This one, however, got away. Romar took the blame, saying he didn't have his team prepared.

"We can put this one on me. They played extremely well, but we should have given them a better fight," he said.

Navy shaded by Bucknell; Army edged by Lafayette

The Associated Press

LEWISBURG, Pa. — Charles Lee scored 19 of his 22 points while staking Bucknell to a first-half lead on the way to a 71-60 victory over Navy on Sunday.

Abe Badmus had 10 points for the Bison (17-7, 8-3 Patriot League), who guilt a 34-25 advantage at the break.

Greg Sprink had 14 points and 10 rebounds

for Navy (7-17, 3-8) and George O'Garra contributed 13

points.

Bucknell's lead was only 61-54 with six minutes to go when Tarik Viera-McClymont snagged an offensive rebound and passed to Kevin Bettencourt for a three-pointer that gave the Bison a 10-point edge.

The Midshipmen twice cut the margin to eight points but were held without a field goal for the last 5:29.

Lee hit consecutive three-pointers and added another basket as Bucknell broke to a 12-3 lead. Navy closed to 20-18, but Lee hit consecutive jumpers and another three-pointer to help the Bison to a 17-19 lead.

Lafayette 76, Army 73: At West Point, N.Y., Sean Knitter scored 21 points as Lafayette (7-17, 2-9 Patriot League) held off Army (3-20, 1-10) despite a combined 50 points by the Black Knights' Matt Bell and Cory Sining.

Bell, who finished with 30 points, hit a free throw with 6.1 seconds to play to cut the margin to one. Knitter, fouled immediately after Lafayette inbounded the ball, converted two free throws with 5.5 left, and Army missed a final shot as time expired.

Lafayette led throughout and was ahead 65-53 with 6:46 to play when Army gradually worked its way back into the contest.

Jamaal Douglas had 11 points and nine rebounds for Lafayette, which led 27-23 at the half. Marcus Harley had 13 points.

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For NHL, no news not always good news

It wasn't as if the NHL was having such a great season to begin with.

So there's that consolation if or when league boss Gary Bettman pulls the plug on this one.

Think about it. If the commissioner hadn't come up with that fifty lockout maneuver when he did, chances are good the three biggest stories at this juncture would have all been public-relations disasters, playing out in courtrooms and offices instead of ice rinks, and dragging the attention of most casual fans along with them.

Those stories, in rough chronological order, would have been: Former St. Louis goon Mike Danton being sentenced last November to 7½ years in prison for trying to have his agent killed; former Vancouver slugger Todd Bertuzzi petitioning Bettman last month for reinstatement after his vicious sneak attack on Colorado forward Steve Moore's career in jeopardy; and rising Atlanta star Dany Heatley being sentenced last week to three years' probation after pleading guilty to second-degree vehicular homicide in the death of teammate Dan Snyder.

That's the problem with the NHL. Pro hockey can be exhilarating, but hasn't been for a while, and the only time it makes the front of the sports pages any time it is for some horror or something goes terribly awry.

Now some people will argue that even bad press is better than being ignored, which is essentially where the pro game

Jim Litke



finds itself at the moment. But there's no convincing Bettman of that, probably because nearly all the press during his 12-year reign has been bad.

Bettman took the job pledging to put hockey on equal footing with the other major team sports, and he widened the NHL's footprint from 21 franchises to 30, made inroads into such contrabandial hockey meccas as Arizona, Florida, Tennessee and Texas, grew revenues from \$400 million to almost \$2 billion, and brought big-time U.S. broadcasters into the league's TV fold.

But running with the big boys carries a steep price tag and all that expansion accomplished was to put more teams in a deeper financial hole. A league-sponsored report last February put losses from the previous season at \$273 million, and there are only two ways to get rid of a deficit like that; one is to bring in more money, the other is to cut costs.

Unfortunately, Bettman failed to get "cost certainty" the first time he locked the players out and lost nearly half of the 1994-95 season. This time around, he's willing to call off the whole deal and risk driving away even more fans to get his way.

Any idea that stupid is rarely the work of

one man, and that's certainly the case here. The players are taking home three-quarters of what the teams are taking in — the average salary has grown to \$1.8 million last season from \$558,000 in Bettman's first season — and while their union has shown some willingness to compromise in the few bargaining sessions that have taken place, they're drawing the line at a salary cap.

The NFL and NBA have them in place, baseball still does not.

Bettman and his owners have gone on record guaranteeing the players an annual income of \$1.3 million under their latest proposal — with the cap included. But as NBA star Latrell Sprewell said so plaintively earlier this season, players have families to feed, too. That's their rationale for letting this season go down the drain, and like Bettman, they're foolishly sticking to it.

Some of the resulting developments would be funny, if only they weren't so painful.

A nine-man group called the Atlanta Spirit bought the NHL Thrashers, the NBA Hawks and Philips Arena operating rights last year, and part of its paycheck was supposed to come Sunday, with a chance to host hockey's All-Star Game. Instead, with the arena dark, a member of the ownership group said he might go sit in the stands "and pretend like I'm watching a game."

"It's been a disappointment," Michael Gearon Jr., told his hometown newspaper, "we haven't seen a hockey game, really, since we became owners."

Neither, for that matter, has anyone else. By this point in previous negotiations between billionaires and millionaires, fans would have chosen sides, with the resulting public pressure forcing one or the other — or both — to make meaningful concessions.

Instead, both sides have interpreted the fans' silence as an endorsement of their position.

Wait until they find out the real reasons things have been so quiet. The product is dull and expensive. No sooner had the game, where fans still care deeply, and where there are plenty of alternatives and fans couldn't care less.

Instead of admitting the mistakes of the past decade of expansion, Bettman is determined to get a collective bargaining agreement that justifies them. And the players are just as determined to call his bluff.

If only the lot of them had been half this stubborn at getting to the bottom of the Olympic fiasco in Nagano. No sooner had those Games opened the eyes of fans worldwide to the speed, skill and beauty of the sport than a handful of busted tables and chairs wound up stealing the spotlight.

Like this mess, nobody took responsibility for that one, either.

And hockey wound up taking the rap, a reminder that no news is not always good news.

Jim Litke is a national sports columnist for The Associated Press. Write to him at: jlitke@ap.org

Canseco: Steroids made career possible

The Associated Press

Jose Canseco said in an interview with "60 Minutes" that he would never have been a major league-caliber baseball player without using steroids.

"I don't recommend steroids for everyone and I don't recommend growth hormones for everyone," Canseco said. "But for certain individuals, I truly believe, because I've experienced with it for so many years, that it can make an average athlete a super athlete."

"It can make a super athlete incredible. Just legendary."

The interview was broadcast Sunday on CBS, one day before the release of Canseco's book, "Juiced: Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits & How Baseball Got Big."

Canseco said he and fellow slugger Mark McGwire weren't close as teammates on the Oakland Athletics, but often injected together and created the myth of steroids as casual shop talk.

"Mark and I weren't really in a sense of buddy buddies," Canseco said. "But there are certain subjects that we could talk about in front of obviously steroids and so forth."

McGwire, who has repeatedly denied steroid use, said in a statement to the television news magazine "Once and for all I did not use steroids nor any illegal substance. The relationship that these allegations portray couldn't be further from the truth."

Canseco also told Wallace that steroids give athletes an edge besides increased size and strength. "A lot of it is psychological," he



In this video image released in New York by CBS, former baseball slugger Jose Canseco, right, is interviewed by 60 minutes host Mike Wallace. Canseco spoke candidly about his use of steroids during his major league career and injecting the performance enhancing drugs into the bodies of some of baseball's biggest stars, including Mark McGwire, the first player to hit 70 home runs in a single season.

"Mark and I weren't really in a sense of buddy buddies. But there are certain subjects that we could talk about, like obviously steroids and so forth."

Jose Canseco

Former Oakland A's slugger

said. "I mean, you really believe you have edge. You feel the strength, and the stamina."

Canseco said he introduced steroids to former Texas Rangers teammates Rafael Palmeiro,

Juan Gonzalez and Ivan Rodriguez. All have publicly denied using performance-enhancing drugs.

"I injected them. Absolutely," Canseco said.

Tony La Russa, who managed

Oakland when McGwire and Canseco helped the A's win a World Series, has stood behind McGwire's denial, telling "60 Minutes" that the first baseman got his strength and size from weight-lifting and a careful diet.

La Russa was skeptical of Canseco's denial, telling "60 Minutes" that the first baseman got his strength and size from weight-lifting and a careful diet.

"First of all, I think he's in dire straits and needs money," La Russa said. "I think secondly ... I think there's a healthy case of envy and jealousy."

"60 Minutes" planned to air more of Canseco's interview in its Wednesday program.

NHL: League preparing to officially end season

NHL, FROM BACK PAGE

The NHL said its 30 clubs need to know what their costs would be, and the only way that could be achieved is with a salary cap that linked league revenues to player costs.

A cap was an automatic deal-breaker for the union even though it agreed that the financial landscape had to change. The players' association contended that there are many other ways to fix it.

The sides have traded proposals throughout the lockout that started Sept. 16. But the salary cap has always been the sticking point. Other issues such as arbitration, revenue-sharing, and rookie caps, never reached the true negotiating stage because the sides couldn't agree on the big issue.

On Friday, the NHL sent a memo to its 30 clubs, allowing them to contact players — something that was previously forbidden. The memo also allowed team executives to speak publicly about the lockout without being subject to fines.

AP Sports Writer Ronald Blum contributed to this report.



Dale Jarrett holds the trophy in victory lane on Sunday after winning the pole for this Sunday's Daytona 500 at Daytona International Speedway.

Jarrett a surprise winner of race pole

BY MIKE HARRIS

The Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — For a guy still fighting the flu, Dale Jarrett was feeling pretty good.

Considered nothing more than an afterthought by most people after his first winless season since 1992, the three-time Daytona 500 winner knew he wasn't supposed to be one of the guys to beat in the season-opening race.

That changed Sunday when Jarrett, showing signs of his old flash, won his third Daytona 500 pole.

That established him as one of the favorites for next Sunday's Nextel Cup event.

"You sit and watch and read and listen to everything that's talked about for the Daytona 500, and probably for good reason," Jarrett said. "You really haven't seen the 88 car or my name and face for a while."

"But we just know what it takes to win at this. We may be getting up there in age, but that doesn't matter. I think we can be considered a car and team to beat on Sunday."

Jimmie Johnson, coming off a victory Saturday night at the non-points Budweiser Shootout, will share the front row and the favorite's role with Jarrett.

"We're really looking forward to the race," Johnson said. "We feel like we've got a better car for the 500 than we had last night."

"We're definitely feeling momentum," added Johnson, who narrowly missed the Cup title last year and is considered by many the championship favorite heading into 2005.

Jeff Gordon, Johnson's Hendrick Motorsports teammate, was fastest in practice Saturday at Daytona International Speedway and was the heavy favorite in the garage area to take the pole.

It appeared to be a good prediction when the two-time 500 winner took the top spot early in qualifying Sunday with a lap of

188.155 mph. But Jarrett, among the fastest drivers in pre-season testing, topped Gordon's Chevrolet with a lap of 188.312, grabbing his first Daytona pole since 2000, when he last won the big race.

Johnson, the 53rd of 57 drivers to make a qualifying attempt, pushed Gordon back to third in the field with a lap of 188.170.

Jarrett, his voice rough from the lingering effects of his illness, said, "I'm still a bit under the weather. I'm trying to get rest at night, but I'm doing all right and things like this certainly make the healing process a lot better."

"This is really a good race car," added the driver of a Robert Yates Racing Ford Taurus. "These guys have been working on this car since October. It's been in the wind tunnel a lot. We had a good test here in January."

Kevin Harvick was a somewhat surprising fourth at 187.914 in a Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet, followed by the Chevys of MB2/MBV Motorsports' teammates Jeff Nemecek and Scott Riggs at 187.837 and 187.758, respectively.

Only the front row starters locked in starting spots for next Sunday's race although, under NASCAR's new qualifying rules, the top 35 teams in car owner points are guaranteed starting positions in the race. All Sunday's time trials did for everyone other than Jarrett and Johnson was to determine where they will start in Thursday's 250-mile qualifying races.

Rounding out the top 10 in qualifying were Jason Leffler, reigning cup champion Kurt Busch, Ricky Rudd and Elliott Sadler.

Defending Daytona winner Dan Einarbald Jr. qualified 39th Sunday, but said he was not discouraged.

"The car races really well in the draft," Junior said. "Everything works fine, we'll have a good race on Thursday and get up front sooner or later."

Mickelson enjoys walk on the beach, easy win

BY DOUG FERGUSON

The Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Two weeks, two victories for Phil Mickelson.

And these aren't ordinary victories.

Mickelson is usually a thrill-a-minute guy who keeps everyone entertained by trying to hit clutch shots along the back nine with the tournament at stake. He birdied five of his last seven holes to win the Masters last year. He once hit a tee shot into the canyon during a playoff at Torrey Pines and still managed to win with a double bogey.

That's what makes these last two weeks on the PGA Tour so alarming.

One week after winning in Phoenix by a career-high five strokes, Mickelson went wire-to-wire in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am to win by four strokes over Mike Weir.

"It's obviously doing something right," Weir said.

Mickelson has won his past two tournaments by nine shots. Going into this year, he had won his previous eight PGA Tour titles by a combined nine shots.

After working on the right things now for a year, he's starting back my distance off the tee and being able to utilize my wedge play, I feel like I'm able to make a lot more birdies," Mickelson said. "It just seems like... I don't want to say the game is easier, but it just feels a little bit easier."

There wasn't much heavy lifting Sunday, for sure.

Mickelson closed with a 1-over 73, the first time he has ever won with a final round over par. About the only thing he didn't get was the 72-hole record. He missed a 15-foot birdie putt on the final hole and finished at 19-under 269, one shot short of the record set seven years ago by Mark O'Meara.

"I really don't think about records like that, individual tournament records," Mickelson said. "I just really wanted to win this tournament."

He was never in doubt from the time Mickelson opened with a course-record 62 at Spyglass Hill, regarded as one of the toughest tests in the world.

Weir tried to make it interesting.

The Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Vijay Singh will be the No. 1 seed in the Match Play Championship, narrowly hanging onto the top spot in the world rankings despite missing the cut in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

The world ranking released Sunday night determines the 64-man field for the World Golf Championship, which starts Feb. 23 at La Costa Resort just north of San Diego.



Phil Mickelson follows his drive from the 9th tee of the Pebble Beach Golf Links during the final round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am. Mickelson shot a 1-over-par 73 to finish at total 19-under-par.

The former Masters champion birdied three of his first four holes — the exception was a bogey when he missed the third green — and then made the only birdie of the final round on the 430-yard ninth hole, which plays along the cliffs and into a wet wind. Weir hit 3-wood to 6 feet.

When he birdied the 11th hole to get to 14 under, Mickelson's lead was down to four.

Mickelson, who had bogeys on Nos. 9 and 10 to give the Canadian a fleeting hole, was never worried. He knew the outward 10 holes at Pebble Beach were the toughest, and he only needed to get through them with limited damage.

When he got to the 11th, he smoked a drive down the middle of the fairway, hit a wedge into 18 feet and hit the purest putt of his final round for a birdie that pushed his lead back up to five.

Both players spent the rest of the day missing putts by the tiniest margins. Weir burned the edge on his next six holes, and his chip for eagle on the 18th just turned away. Mickelson followed his birdie at No. 11 by missing putts from 6, 4 and 8 feet, then missed three more inside 18 feet.

But all that affected was the final score.

This is new territory for Mickelson, winning by such a large margin, and it might take some getting used to.

"It was weird," he said. "I didn't feel the normal intensity, the normal stress. It was a very enjoyable round."

Which type of victory does he prefer?

"I enjoy the stress-free day at Pebble Beach, playing with friends," he said, alluding to Ford president Steve Lyons, with whom Mickelson has an endorsement deal. "But I also enjoy that intensity and nervousness and the excitement of having to pull off clutch shots to win."

He felt that earlier in the week, when he was building a seven-shot lead that made this event a foregone conclusion.

Mickelson became the first player to go wire-to-wire in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am over four rounds, and it was the first time in his career he had led from start to finish.

Weir didn't give up hope until he missed a 15-foot birdie putt on the 17th. His 67 was the only sub-70 score in the final round.

"I played one of the better rounds I've ever played," Weir said. "It could have been a really special round if a few things could have dropped for me."

Singh is No. 1, Woods No. 2 for Match Play

The Associated Press

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. — Vijay Singh will be the No. 1 seed in the Match Play Championship, narrowly hanging onto the top spot in the world rankings despite missing the cut in the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am.

The world ranking released Sunday night determines the 64-man field for the World Golf Championship, which starts Feb. 23 at La Costa Resort just north of San Diego.

Tiger Woods, the two-time defending Match Play champion, will be the No. 2 seed. Woods can return to No. 1 in the world at Riviera this week in the Nissan Open, although that will not change the seedings for La Costa.

The top 65 are eligible for the \$7.5 million tournament because Ernie Els, ranked third, has said he will not play.

Tour officials did not anticipate anyone withdrawing, although players have until Friday to enter the tournament.

With Els not playing, Phil Mickelson will be the third seed and Retief Goosen will be No. 4. Assuming no one drops out, Singh would play Shingo Katayama in the first round and Woods would face Nick Price.

"I think Match Play is going to be a wonderful event," Mickelson said Sunday. "I think there is a good chance this year a lot of the top guys will win the first few matches and square off later in the final rounds."

SPORTS



Jarrett claims third
Daytona 500 pole,
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3 more TDs, another MVP



AFC quarterback Peyton Manning, of the Indianapolis Colts, looks to hand off during the Pro Bowl on Sunday in Honolulu. The AFC won 38-27 and Manning was named MVP. See story on Page 29.

Report:
NHL ready
to cancel

News conference scheduled
Tuesday to call off season

By IRA PODELL
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With no miracle save in sight and a weekend deadline long gone, the NHL made plans for a news conference Tuesday to cancel what little remained of a season already decimated by a lockout.

A public relations executive, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told The Associated Press that planning was under way Monday for NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman to make the announcement at a news conference in New York.

The Canadian Press, citing an unidentified source, said Bettman will cancel the season at the news conference.

The NHL would become the first major professional league in North America to cancel an entire season because of a labor dispute. This would mark the first time the Stanley Cup was not awarded since a flu epidemic canceled the finals in 1919.

Asked about The Canadian Press report, NHL spokesman Frank Brown said the league had no immediate comment.

After vowing not to reach out to each other after two days of talks broke off Thursday, the sides met Sunday at the request of a high-ranking federal mediator. Neither Bettman nor players' association executive director Bob Goodenow attended.

But that round of talks in Washington was also unsuccessful, with both sides saying that no progress was made.

Neither side has been willing to budge on the salary-cap issue — the NHL has said it is necessary in any new deal, and the players' association has rejected it as a solution.

NHL chief legal officer Bill Daly was joined Sunday at the five-hour meeting by outside counsel Bob Battersman, with players' association senior director Ted Saskin and outside counsel John McCambridge on the other side.

The sides were assisted by mediators twice before, as recently as a Feb. 2 negotiating session in Newark, N.J. Sunday's meeting was requested by Scot B. Beckenbaugh, the acting director of the U.S. Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service.

Neither side thought mediation would help end the stalemate that has lasted five months.

The lockout reached its 152nd day Monday, a day after the NHL was to hold its All-Star game in Atlanta.

Bettman said the sides needed to start putting a deal on paper by the weekend if the NHL was going to hold a 28-game season and a 16-team playoff.

SEE NHL ON PAGE 30

Lefty gets it right
again, becomes
first wire-to-wire
champ at Pebble
Beach Pro-Am

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Malone retires
after 19
seasons with
no title,
promising 'no
unbelievable
comebacks'

Page 26



Second-ranked
North Carolina
rebounds from loss
to Duke by downing
UConn

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